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[Information on the Mallams, combination jurists and Mohammedan scholars, has been placed in category 875. -- Analyst]

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hereditary chieftainship, the accumulation of surplus renders such development more likely. But even here the existence of the special chief's cult, which imposes additional expenses on the chief (higher than in the case of cults to which he need only contribute his share), should tend to adjust more equitably the economic balance between chief and elders.[1]

However, we have other evidence to show that the chief's position, economically privileged though it may be, is not *meant* to lead to the formation of an essentially different, sharply separated, permanently privileged ruling class; evidence, in other words, to show that the political organization of the village is meant to preserve the social homogeneity of its community. This evidence lies in the rules of etiquette defining the behaviour of the people towards their chief. People everywhere show reverence to their chief: they kneel down by the door when entering his presence. Often there are raised platforms in the chief's entrance hut, near the door leading to the inner part of the house, on which he would sit, while the others are squatting on the ground in front of him. Or the chief would sit on a leopard skin or at least a cow-hide, while the others are assigned seats on grass-mats. The chief, finally, is addressed by special formulae of greeting reserved for his title. Yet again, this attitude of reverence represents only the highest grade of respect as it is shown similarly to all *nũsaži*, graded in accordance with age and rank. In every house young men or visitors of lower status and seniority would squat near the door while the head of the house, or honoured guests, occupy places on the inner side—the more honoured side. Special greetings of the same symbolic nature as the salute reserved for the chief are typical of the various ranks. Here as in the case of economic privileges etiquette marks off the chief not as standing on 'a plane by himself' but merely as the most prominent in a graded order of prominence. If on state occasions, wearing his state robe and turban, the chief is conspicuously marked off from the rest of the people, when going out to his farms there is nothing to distinguish him from an ordinary farmer; like him he carries his hoe across the shoulder, a straw hat on his head, and wears only the cheap blue cloth slung loosely round the body. There is thus ample 'neutral ground' in the matter of etiquette and distinction of status between chief, elders, and the rest of the people.

But above all, the attitude of reverence and the special chief's salute are reserved for the chief's person; they are not enjoyed equally by his relations merely in virtue of their being his relations. The exalted social position of the chief does not extend to his family—there exist, even in hereditary chieftainship, no symbols of a hereditary class differentiation. Later, in the discussion of social classes in the kingdom, we shall understand fully the significance of this 'democratic' element in Nupe village chieftainship.

[1] In 1936 the chief of Doko bought five sheep for sacrifices connected with the 'chief's cult', contributed beer to other ceremonies, and presented two gowns to men with whom he was anxious to keep on good terms—not counting occasional small gifts and contributions, e.g. to family feasts, &c. Altogether an expenditure of approximately £2–3, or 30 to 40 bundles of corn, that is, roughly half of his income from tithe.

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There is one exception—which proves the rule. In Kutigi all the members of the chief's family are addressed as *waci*, 'Great Ones', and though not shown special reverence are regarded somewhat as a class apart. The explanation is this: the rulers of Kutigi come from an alien group, those Bornu immigrants to whom I have referred already. Owing to their economic and educational advantages (they were Mohammedans in a pagan and rather primitive country) they had established themselves as the dominant group, and the leaders of the immigrants became the political rulers of the original inhabitants. In this position they were confirmed by the *Etsu* Nupe. In the Fulani dynasty of Nupe the Benu had an example close at hand how an alien group could arrogate to itself the position of a hereditary ruling caste. They followed it in every detail: from the Fulani kings they adopted the salutation *waci*; and like them they managed that the recognition of social superiority was extended not only to the actually ruling chief but to his whole kinship group—a whole hereditary ruling class.

BINDING FORCES

Let us try, in conclusion, to define the specific nature of the political unity achieved in the Nupe village. It must be emphasized, first of all, that it *is* a specific unity, and that it is achieved by mechanisms peculiar to itself. In other words, political organization is not—as is the case in many primitive societies—simply absorbed by religion, magic, or kinship, and the mechanisms of control which these domains of culture entail. Nor is it, on the other hand, possessed of any of the conspicuous instruments of political control which characterize other societies: a police or military executive, a disproportionate chieftain power, or an elaborate apparatus of coercion. Moreover, the connexion between political control and religious and kinship agencies is very close. Political organization delegates to the kinship system the important task of providing the executive organs for the community in the persons of the *nūsaźi*, who, as we have seen, are village elders and family heads in one. And religious beliefs and practices supply the spiritual sanction of chieftainship and authority in general. But as important as these specific contributions of religion and kinship are certain less specific influences, by means of which both religion and kinship help to sustain the system of political control. Thus encouragement of intermarriage within the village community adds the strength of interlocked kinship relations to political ties; and the communal religious rites exercise, and underline in their own impressive fashion, the unit of the village group.[1] They do it consciously and openly: their dedication to the support of the village community expresses itself in the prayer formula which occurs in every religious ritual whatever its avowed purpose or the occasion of its performance: *eźi u de lafiya*, 'may the village prosper'. Political control, kinship, and religion thus define coextensive social units. Only because

[1] This interdependence of political unit and religious congregation is analysed more explicitly in the case of the *gunnu* cult. (J.R.A.I., lxvii, 1937, pp. 91–130.)

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village chieftainship is thus thought of as an office held 'by the grace of the king'. I have also mentioned that the appointment of the village chief is subject, to-day as of old, to confirmation by the *Etsu* Nupe.[1] The chief thus becomes the official representative of the king, responsible to him for law and order and the collection of tax, but also able to rely on his sovereign's spiritual or political support. The people of the village can appeal to the *Etsu* if they are dissatisfied with their chief, and in the case of rival claims to chieftainship the king would be called upon to decide between the claimants—a role which he did not always undertake impartially; bribes offered by a chief threatened with the loss of his position or a new claimant would easily influence his decision.[1] The control of the king over his chiefs is expressed already in the ceremonial of the appointment. The chief-elect, accompanied by the head elders, would be summoned to the capital to receive his appointment and to be vested with a gown, turban, and sandals as insignia of his office, in a ceremony which closely resembles the investiture of officers of state or members of the royal nobility. The *Etsu* Nupe may also be called in to arbitrate in internal disputes, e.g. over the succession to local ranks —we remember the example from Doko. Lastly, legal cases come under the jurisdiction of the *Etsu* and his appointed agents, thus removing from the orbit of the community the right to see offences punished and retaliation achieved.

Another source of 'disturbance' lies in the impact of Islam. It led in many cases to a spiritual separation of chief and community, for many chiefs embraced Islam (at least nominally) long before the rest of the people. Thus these chiefs can no longer organize, and rarely even show interest in, the traditional religious ceremonies which weld the community into a single congregation. Nor can they base their authority, hereditary or not, on that spiritual commonness of which it was once an expression. They rely instead more or less openly on the closer association with the Mohammedan rulers of the country with whom they now share the creed—at least one feature of their exalted position. In its ever-increasing scope of proselytizing, Islam drives the wedge of another class distinction into the structure of village society. The distinction between Mohammedans and pagans in a village often has this effect, that the two sections differ not only in religious observances, but also in general mode of life, dress, important food habits (Mohammedans do not drink sorghum-beer, the traditional ceremonial drink of the Nupe peasants), their—often imaginary—educational qualification and, again, in the degree of the affinity they could claim to the highest social stratum in the country.

In other spheres of life—economic, educational—similar influences are at work, striking at the very roots of social homogeneity. But we may cut short our description; we shall meet with these influences again later. Our present discussion has established the main facts. For at least a century and a half the Nupe village did not exist in that self-centred, secure isolation in which the balance of its social system could fulfil

[1] Bribes to the *Etsu* are said to have played an important part in gaining the assent of the king when the new chiefs of Doko usurped the chieftainship.

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the commoners, men without name and rank—sit and stand outside, chatting and watching what there is to watch; the members of the privileged classes, titled nobility, and Mohammedan priests, are sitting in the inner courtyard and in *katamba* (entrance-halls), each *katamba* reserved for a special group. Only royal princes and the highest officers of state are admitted to the presence of the *Etsu*; they sit in the inner part of the house together with personal friends and favourites of the king.[1] All these people come to pay their respect to their sovereign, to see and to be seen, to exercise prerogatives, or to proclaim their connexion with the privileged and mighty. This external arrangement of the Friday ceremonial is indeed a symbol of the whole social structure of Nupe kingdom with its rigid system of etiquette and precedence, its differentiation of status, rank, and prerogatives, and its display of wealth and power. This structure we must now analyse in detail.

THE ROYAL NOBILITY

The descendants of the house of Mallam Dendo, under their three heads *Etsu*, *Shaba*, and *Kpotū*, form the royal nobility of Nupe, the *ena gitsúži*, the Group of Those who will become King. They are *gitsúži* in the sense that from their ranks the new king is elected. The titles of nobility which they hold by the privilege of birth may lead every one of them, by slower or more rapid promotion, eventually to the highest rank, kingship. In most cases the royal prince who succeeds to the throne has reached first the rank of *Shaba*; the change from old to new king is thus made almost automatic, a dangerous interregnum is avoided, and the fight between the rival factions is confined to the less dangerous sphere of competition for the ranks next to the king. Only twice was a man who had not reached the title of *Shaba* (or, if the *Shaba* had died, the title of *Kpotū*) made *Etsu*.[2] In 1936 there existed, or more precisely, were actually held, 41 royal ranks, of which 10 fell to the house of Usman Zaki, 17 to the house of Masaba (the house which had supplied the last

[1] The arrangement at these receptions, the way in which the people who are admitted to the presence of the *Etsu* group themselves, is invariably the same. It is shown in this diagram:

Two bodyguards with ostrich fans
Etsu (on state bed)

Gitsúži — *Ndeji* — *Sarakiži*
Mayaki
Liman-Alhali
Mallams

[2] These exceptions were *Etsu* Mohamadu who, only *Makū*, was appointed *Etsu* by the Niger Company, and the present *Etsu* who had been *Ndgenu*, but had held the important office of a District Head of Jima. It is the present tendency of the Administration to abolish the office of *Shaba* and to make the appointment to kingship a free election from the royal ranks. After the death of the late *Shaba* in 1935 no new *Shaba* has been appointed. It is not yet clear what effect, if any, this innovation will have upon the internal dynastic organization. The threefold system is so deeply rooted that I believe the effect will be only to abolish a name, and that the rank next in order in the dynastic section will assume the main function of the abolished rank, that is, headship of the dynastic clan.

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Etsu), and 14 to the house of Umaru, the present ruling house. The death of a high rank-holder and the subsequent appointment of a successor is frequently made an occasion for a far-reaching reshuffle of ranks, called in Nupe *wúruwíru*. It goes hand in hand with a large-scale exchange of houses, younger brothers or sons moving into the vacated house of their older brothers or fathers (vacated by death or promotion), for the state residence of the highest *gitsú* ranks goes with the title. Rarely would a new house be built in Bida to-day for a *wacī*, a Great One, as the members of the royal nobility are also called; 'only *talakaži*, Poor Ones', said an informant, 'must build themselves new homes.' Appointment to a first rank and promotion to a higher rank is granted by the king in council with royal princes and the other officers of state. Any able-bodied man in the Fulani families who has reached senior age and who has proved his ability and loyalty can claim to be admitted to the ranks of the titled *gitsúži*.[1] But there is no rule. Favouritism, intrigues, bribes play their part in appointment and promotion. The ranks which a family can accumulate reflects its influence at the court and its favour with the ruling king. It is no accident that the royal house of the last *Etsu* (who had only just died) counts more ranks than either of the other two dynasties. Unlike the system of ranks which we found in the village these royal ranks do not leave an old man or an invalid who can no longer fulfil his duties in the possession of his office. In such a case a younger man is appointed to the rank, and the old holder is known as the 'Old *Kpotū*', or whatever the rank may be. A similar difference between the rank systems of village and state lies in that perfect health is an indispensable condition of appointments to any state rank. Deformity, even of the slightest kind, is ruled out. The younger brother of one of the Emirs of Bida, who had a withered arm, was unable to obtain any title at all. In the state system of ranks, which was based on service in the war and on offices vital to the safety of the state, respect for old age or consideration for even minor disablements has no place.

The investiture—it is the same for royal princes and for officers of state—is an interesting ceremony, an impressive proclamation of the main facts on which the feudal kingdom is built: social promotion, the oath of fealty and loyalty and responsibility towards king and country. A propitious day for the investiture is first fixed by Mallams or diviners. Then follows the invitation to the ceremony—gifts of kola-nuts sent by the candidate to all men of rank and standing. Drummers in the house of the *Etsu* announce the beginning of the ceremony; all rank-holders are assembled in the *Etsu*'s house. He addresses the candidate ceremonially, proclaiming three times his appointment. The *Alkali* (or *Liman*), as representative of the clergy of the kingdom, clothes the candidate in an embroidered gown and rich cloak—gifts of the *Etsu*—and places a turban on his head. Then he leads the prayer, and the *Etsu* addresses a final exhortation to the new officer of state: 'Practice for-

[1] The Nupe of Patigi have preserved a linguistic distinction which has disappeared in Bida, namely, between royal princes who have received titles and those who have not. The former are called *b'rama* (their traditional salute is *lerama*, i.e. behold the *rama*), and the latter *gitsúži*.

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bearance; do not set the hearts of your men against each other; beware of conceit, and do not fail the people.' All present repeat, like a formula of confirmation: *Hakíka, hakíka*, 'verily, verily'. Drummers and musicians intone the songs and drum rhythms which are associated with the family and rank of the newly knighted; he mounts his horse and rides, accompanied by all rank-holders, through the town, dismounting at each house of a prince or *saraki*, making his greetings to the head of the house. If the newly appointed (or promoted) nobleman is a member of the royal dynasty he stops at each of the three royal houses and says a prayer at the grave of his ancestors. A great festivity in his house, last[illegible] for several days, to which everybody in the town is invited, noblem[illegible] and commoners alike, concludes the ceremony.

Descendants of the men who conquered the country and appropriated all vacant land, the *gitsúži* may become, through ordinary inheritance, owners of land and considerable wealth. But the appointment to a royal rank meant more than this chance of inheritance: it meant status, influence, and access to increasing power and wealth. The princes of rank were admitted to the *nkó*, the Council of State, but had little influence, it seems, upon the actual government—this was entrusted to the council of the more competent, appointed, officers of state. The power of the *gitsúži* rested in the main on two things: the part they played in the wars, and their position as *egba*, royal fief-holders and delegates placed in charge of the districts of the kingdom. We shall speak presently in more detail of these services which the royal nobility rendered to king and state. I will give here a list of all the ranks held at present among the *gitsúži* of Bida. To illustrate the system of promotion I have indicated certain changes in the distribution of ranks which had been anticipated by the *Etsu* and his council after the death of the *Shaba* in 1935; as already said, the Administration was not prepared to endorse this reshuffle, which would imply the reoccupation of the post of *Shaba* (see p. 93, n. 2). The list also shows some of the fiefs which were connected with the ranks in pre-European times, and finally the offices under the present-day Native Administration which are linked with certain *gitsú* ranks.

Dynastic Ranks in Bida 1936

1. *Ranks held by Members of the emi 'tsu Maru (House of Umaru Majigi)*

Etsu, appointed 1935, former title *Nágenu*.
Shaba, died December 1935; till 1934 District Head of Sakpe. Fief in pre-European times: Mokwa.
'Old' *Makū*, till 1934 District Head of Kacha, then retired; previous title *Luhpā*. Fief in pre-European times: Kacha.
Makū, younger brother of 'Old' *Makū*; no official position.
Ginya, present District Head of Badeggi.
Cekpa
Gara
Lafyene (Lakpene)
Uban Dóma
Tsedyi

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565 *Táka*, held by eldest son of *Shaba*.
Sontwáraki
554 *Wacī Taba*, held by younger brother of *Shaba*.
Nda Iya
Nágenu, held by younger brother of *Etsu*, appointed 1935; no previous title; District Head of Jima.
'Old' *Natsu*, retired from office 1934.
Natsu, son of a former *Kpotū*, younger brother of *Ginya*; on the Bida Town Council.
Shabarabá, a new *ad hoc* introduced rank, bestowed in May 1936 on the eldest son of the late *Shaba*, as no higher rank was vacant.

2. *Ranks held by Members of the emi 'tsu Usman* (*House of Usman Zaki*)

'Old' *Kpotū*, died in 1936; for some time District Head of Sakpe. Fief in pre-European times: *Edupkā* (countries beyond the Niger).
Kpotū, son and nephew of former *Kpotū*; District Head of Kutigi. He will shortly be asked to resign, that is, to become an 'old' *Kpotū*, on the grounds that his health is not very good. The *Etsu* does not contemplate promoting him to the vacant post of *Shaba* in accordance with the general rules of succession.*
Nágya, till 1935 District Head of Mokwa, now member of the King's Council. He is chosen to succeed to the rank of *Shaba*. Fief in pre-European times: *Edukpā*.
Rami, since 1935 District Head of Mokwa.
Kusódu, younger brother of the late *Etsu* Bello, living in his Bida house. Fief in pre-European times: Kamberi country.
Wacī Tswa
Shaba Gini
Fogū
Lafarma
Kafa
Cata

[643] * The ground of ill health is a pretext rather than the true reason—and this is very significant. The *Kpotū* does not belong to the house of Usman Zaki, although he is generally regarded as belonging to this dynasty. He is a descendant of Abdu Gboya, one of the sons of Mallam Dendo whose offspring had failed to secure succession to the throne of Nupe. He is, in fact, the only member of these 'second-rank' royal families who had obtained, still in the fourth generation, one of the three highest dynastic positions. His premature resignation is a striking evidence of this dynastic policy to restrict succession to the throne to the three 'houses'.

3. *Ranks held by Members of the emi 'tsu Saba* (*House of Etsu Masaba*)

(Late *Etsu* Saidu, died 1935.)
Wacimbe
Nákorji, District Head of Gbangba. Chosen to succeed to office of *Kpotū*. Fief in pre-European times: Yeti.
Lukpā
Tsaduya
Tsaci
Tswasha Giraba†
Tsuroma†

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Beni, Fief in pre-European times: Kin Agbadya (Lokoja).
Tswanku
Tsoyida
Tswankúku
Rofiĕ
Cecekó
Nkoci
Tswashakó
Yitsa
Nddáma

† Two established *gitsí* titles, *Fokpo* and *Gbaruku* (a Dibo word, meaning Old One), are not represented in this list, i.e. are not held at present. On the other hand, new titles are constantly introduced to cope with an increased demand; e.g. *Tsuroma* is a Bornu title (*Ciroma*). The rank *Tswasha Giraba*, lit. '*Tswasha* bestowed in Rabá', seems to have been a newly introduced, additional, rank at one time, in Rabá, as the meaning of the title indicates. The *Etsu* bestowed a new title of this kind shortly before I left Bida on the younger son of the late *Shaba*, making him *Shabami* (lit. '*Shaba* of the House').

OFFICERS OF STATE

Placed under the royal nobility in rank but its equal in political influence is the titled office nobility of the kingdom. Its members are known as *ticiži*, the Titled Ones, or *rowni*, the 'Turbans', so called because the gift of a turban by the king is the symbol of the bestowal of rank and office. There are three groups of officers of state, each of which is thought of as a sharply defined social order or estate—*ena* in Nupe, which means 'group', 'society', 'order': first, the *sarakiži*, a twofold group of civil and military nobility, consisting of the *ena Ndeji*, the Order of Town Elders, and the *ena 'kũ*, the Order of War. Second, the *ena manži*, the Order of Mallams, comprising the judiciary and the clergy of the kingdom, the *Alkali*, judge, and *Liman*, religious head of the Nupe Mohammedans, with their scribes and assistants. The third class of state officials, lowest in rank but still possessed of great influence, is the *ena wuži*, the Order of (Court) Slaves; we shall deal with this group later, in the chapter on slavery.

We shall see that many of the titles of the *saraki* nobility are identical with the ranks bestowed on the village elders. Of some ranks we know that they have been copied comparatively recently by the villagers. Whether this adoption of state ranks by the village communities explains all the existing correspondences, or whether they are due, historically, to the evolution of the kingdom from a village community, we have no means of deciding. To-day, it is a correspondence in name only. The identical symbols of status in the kingdom and in the village refer to very different social contexts. The differences in the official duties and in the rules of appointment will become clear presently. Here I will only mention the difference in the social conceptions upon which the two rank systems rest. Both must be interpreted as systems of selection by means of which the society obtains its leaders. But selection in the village means offering 13 ranks to, say, 200 adult men or—expressed more correctly—13 families; in the kingdom, it means admitting to

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leadership 30 men out of a population of hundreds of thousands. In the village, the position of importance and responsibility already attained by the individual who qualifies for the rank (through seniority, experience, and headship of a kinship group) is at least equal to the new benefits entailed in the appointment; in the state ranks these benefits far outweigh any position one could have made for oneself previous to the appointment—often the latter is negligible. At the same time many of the state ranks, subject to changing political fortunes, are held more insecurely. In the village, then, rank is essentially a form of assured public recognition: in the state it represents a hotly contested and often capricious elevation to the privileged *élite*.

I have called the *saraki* nobility an office nobility to contrast it with the hereditary nobility of the *gitsúži*. The *saraki* ranks are, at least in theory, always open to new blood. Only one or two of the higher ranks are to-day hereditary in practice, having become the prerogative of certain families which, once established in their influential position, secured these offices for their descendants and relatives. Civil and military nobility are mutually exclusive, and are ruled by rigid precedence and promotion. Promotions and first appointments are granted by the king in council with his princes and other officers of state. These ranks, unlike the *gitsú* ranks, cannot be accumulated in the same family; they are bestowed exclusively on one member of the family group, and no other close relative can claim a title or office in addition to the one already bestowed on his 'house'. Only the less rigidly defined benefits of status and economic privileges that go with the elevation to the nobility extend, to a lesser or greater extent, also to the other members of the family group. Outsiders, even commoners, who have won the favour of the king may be admitted to the nobility of the *sarakiži*. Success in war and outstanding military achievement constituted formerly the main claim to *saraki* rank. Wealth and financial influence, which, under the old system were bound up with big land ownership and the slave-trade—prerogatives of princes and noblemen—have come into their own in modern times and are demanding recognition. The granting of titles to rich traders in return for huge presents has, in fact, become a new feature in the Nupe nobility.[1] The result is that the *saraki* group embraces people of very different origin: descendants of the old office nobility of pre-Fulani Nupe as well as families of Nupe commoners who had become partisans of the Fulani conquerors, and also strangers, Hausa, Yoruba, Fulani mercenary soldiers, or rich traders who have earned the gratitude of this or that *Etsu* Nupe. The titles themselves equally reflect the situation, new titles being frequently invented or borrowed from Hausa or Bornu.[2]

[1] *Etsu* Bello and *Etsu* Saidu are said to have 'sold' certain titles for prices varying from £5 to £20 to ambitious, wealthy traders; they are even reported to have conferred important state offices, offices to which the candidate was entitled by birth and standing, such as the office of the *Alkali*, on the payment of a 'fee'.

[2] In present-day Nupe Hausa names have replaced to a large extent the original Nupe titles. The traditional Nupe name, for example, for *sarakiži* (which is a corruption of the Hausa *sarakuna*) is *agabi*, but this name is only pre-

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Civil and military officers received no salary. The payment for their services took the form of a share in the booty of slaves, horses, or other property, made in the war by their household troops; of landed property and fiefs bestowed by the king upon his loyal servants; and, finally, of status and exalted social position linked with title and office. Every promotion to a higher rank, as it involved a larger measure of political influence, involved also claims to larger and more lucrative fiefs.

The *Ndeji*,' Father of the Town', is the head of the civil nobility. He is in charge of the affairs of Bida, and all reports or complaints are brought to him first. He is closest to the king, always about his person, the most powerful of all the officers of state because he 'has the king's ear'. He and the other civil rank-holders are the *shawaciši nya minin*, the Councillors of the Inner House, so called because they hold their daily *nkó* (council) with the king himself.

The *ena 'kū*, a creation of the kingdom, has no parallel in the village organization. Service in the war, open to every man in Nupe, nobleman or commoner, is compulsory for this class of professional soldiers. The 'war-ranks' imply tasks for experts, and special responsibility for the execution of these tasks to king and commander of the army. Thus the different titles have specialized meanings: the *Maiyaki* is the General-in-Chief, the *Uban Dawaki* and *Dokoyiringi* are in command of the main body of horsemen, the *Sokyara* is in charge of the mounted vanguard, the *Ejúkó* of the archers, the *Sónkali* of the foot-troops, &c. The *ena Maiyaki*, too, holds its daily *nkó*, but not in the presence of the king. They, too, receive reports about the affairs of the town, and also of the country at large; but their main work is the discussion and preparation of military expeditions.

Only for the four or five highest ranks of the civil and military nobility is the order of precedence really rigid and generally valid. The significance of the remaining ranks changes frequently; bestowed as they are by the king on individuals to whom he owes gratitude or recognition for their services, they may lose their importance under another king, who has other, new men to reward and to distinguish. On pp. 100–1 is a list of the *saraki* ranks which exist in Bida to-day. Where possible I have indicated previous ranks and promotions, and also the first appointment under one or other *Etsu*.

The *ena manži* derives its name from the fact that the judicial and religious offices which it comprises are bestowed on Mallams, men of learning and scholarship. Profound knowledge of the Mohammedan literature, which is religious and juridical in one, is the only way to these ranks which are, like all other ranks in the kingdom, bestowed by the king. But the specialized training, the very necessity of finding a man of so special an education, limits the number of possible candidates. With knowledge and scholarship the office is handed on from father to son, political influence and power of certain families do the rest, and the result is that the offices of the *Alkali*, Judge, and *Liman*, Head of the Mohammedan clergy, become hereditary almost more rigidly than

served in Patigi. Or again, the highest military rank to-day is called by the Hausa name *Maiyaki*, instead of *Somaš*, which is the old Nupe title.

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565 the *saraki* ranks and offices. Thus the present Chief *Alkali* of Bida as well as his assistant is himself the son of an *Alkali*. The same few families 556 supply to-day the judges for the district courts in Nupe and indeed for 693 many courts outside Nupe country, where the reputation of Bida 793 scholarship has found recognition. And, as a final result of this tendency to make these offices the prerogative of a small group, we find since the time of *Etsu* Mohamadu the two offices of *Liman* and *Alkali* combined in one person.[1]

565 The office of the *Alkali* in Bida, the highest Mohammedan judge of 557 the kingdom, dates back to the first period of Fulani rule. Its impor- 693 tance and distinction is expressed in the fact that Mallam Dendo's eldest son chose for himself the office not of a temporal ruler but of judge of Nupe. Many of the men who held these offices were of great learning and outstanding ability. Some have left behind records of the history of

1. *Ranks of the Ena Ndeji*

Title	*Tribal origin*	*Previous ranks*	*Biographical remarks*
Ndeji	Nupe from Dibo	*Magajin Gari*	Grandfather was *Ndeji*, appointed by *Etsu* Masaba; the father had no title. To-day highest official of the N.A.; head of the Emir's council.
Nyáfyenye	Fulani	*Magajin Gari*	Father and grandfather both *Ndeji*; first appointment under Usman Zaki.
Magajin Gari	Nupe	..	Father was *Nyáfyenye* and later *Ndeji*.
Sonfadakó	,,	*Gadza*	Father had no title; his first appointment was under *Etsu* Maliki, his second under *Etsu* Mamadu.
Gadza	No holder at present, but formerly a very important title.		
Sakiwa	Fulani	..	Father was *Ndeji*, titled under Umaru Majigi.
Mamasú	,,	..	Father held a lower title; he himself was titled under *Etsu* Maliki.
Etsu Basa	Benu-Nupe	..	A hereditary title held in one family.
Etsu Gbari	Nupe	..	Father was *Uban Dawaki*.
Tsadza	Fulani	*Galadiman Gari*	Father and elder brother have held same title.
Ndasú	Hausa	..	Newly introduced title.
Galadiman Gari	Fulani	..	Father was *Gadza*; he himself was appointed under *Etsu* Bello. He became later a 'ward-head' of the modern town-administration.
Kotonkomu	Nupe	..	Father held same title.

[1] There exist two different kinds of *Liman* offices: the *Liman Ratibi*, the minister of the weekday service held in the various mosques of the town, and the *Liman Jemaa*, the minister of the Friday service, which is held in the big city mosque, in the presence of the king. In every part of the town there is a *Liman* of the first kind; but there is only one *Liman Jemaa*. And it is to this highest priestly office that we referred above.

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2. *Ranks of the Ena Maiyaki*

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Title	*Tribal origin*	*Previous ranks*	*Biographical remarks*
Maiyaki	Hausa	*Dokoyiringi, Uban Dawaki*	Father received title of *Maiyaki* in the war. To-day official of the N.A.; on the Emir's council.
Uban Dawaki	Nupe	*Sokyara*	Father *Maiyaki* and *Uban Dawaki*. To-day on the Bida town council.
Sokyara	,,	*Wambayi*	Father was *Sokyara*, *Uban Dawaki*, and finally *Maiyaki*. He himself was formerly on the Bida town council.
Dokoyiringi	,,	*Wambayi*	Father was *Uban Dawaki* and *Maiyaki*.
Ejuko	,,	*Twakoko*	Father already *Ejuko*.
Sondzamitsu	,,	..	Father had no title; son got his under the late *Etsu* because of his wealth.
Sonlawu	,,	*Sarkin Barayi*	Father had no title; son received his in the war.
Sarkin Barayi	Hausa	..	Father was *Maiyaki*.
Twakoko	Nupe	..	Father was *Nagun*.
Nagun	,,	..	Father was made *Nagun* in the war.
Saganawa	Hausa	..	This title is hereditary in one family, followers of the Hausa general and relative (by marriage) of Manko, Handi Boshi.
Wambayi	,,	..	Father was a serf (*bara*) of *Etsu* Abubakari.
Samaji	Nupe	..	..
Galadiman Masu	*Komi*-Yoruba	..	Held in Bida now instead of the old Nupe title *Somasu* (the Nupe equivalent of *Maiyaki*), but is to-day a very small and unimportant title.
Luci	Nupe	..	Formerly a powerful man; lives to-day on a farm in Trans-Kaduna.
Rwafi	Hausa	..	An hereditary title, held by relatives of the Hausa general of Manko, Handi Boshi.
Sonfaddawa	Nupe	..	..
Baride	,,	..	Father was *Sojetsu*.
Sojetsu	,,	..	Received title from *Etsu* Bello; rich landowner.
Magayaki	,,	..	Received title in the war, under *Etsu* Maliki.
Sengabi	,,	..	..
Sokabi	,,	..	..
Manlawo	,,	..	..
Mamasu	,,	..	Father was *Sonlawu*, a title which he received in the war.

Nupe. The judicial organization of the kingdom left them free hand to interpret and apply, even to alter and create laws. The names of past *Alkalai* are known to everybody, and are associated with certain new

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laws or special judicial practices. Of this aspect of their activity we shall hear more at a later stage. But one point (already mentioned) must be stressed here. The office of *Liman* and *Alkali* could become hereditary; many judges and Mohammedan scholars are of Fulani stock; but this reflects only the political influence and partly also the tradition of learning in these families. As representatives of Mohammedan scholarship *Liman* and *Alkali* are only the most exalted exponents of a professional class which comprises men of every status and birth—the Mallams, 'learned men', who are held in high esteem by everyone. Even without rank or title, when of little and insignificant learning, they are placed above the ordinary commoner. They may marry the daughters and sisters of the high-born. The *Etsu* himself, descendant of a Mallam, puts a 'Mallam' before his name. Like his ancestors he honours and receives at his court all Mallams of reputation. They are a class between the classes, a mobile, privileged intelligentsia.

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The description of the hierarchy of Nupe kingdom is incomplete without the mention of a last group of minor rank-holders, composed of the heads of the Bida craft-guilds. The guilds are closed occupational groups, the members of which live together in one locality and practise certain hereditary crafts such as glass-making, brasswork, weaving, &c.[1] The guild-heads receive their titles, together with the usual gift of a turban, from the *Etsu*. Though low down in the scale of ranks, they have yet an official standing, and are raised above the ordinary commoner and peasant. Their headship implies authority over all the members of their craft in town and village. Formerly the guild-heads received a small annual tribute of products of their craft from their fellow craftsmen. Like the members of the nobility, the titled guild-heads are summoned to the *Etsu*'s Council at the *Sallah*, the great Mohammedan festival; and, like the privileged nobility, they are exempted from taxation. Their only tribute takes the form of an annual gift—an *emisa*, or 'salute'—again of products of their craft, the cost of which is borne jointly by the whole guild, and which is presented to the *Etsu* at the *Sallah*.

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Certain craft-guilds are linked with the dynastic division of the capital and are divided into three sections each of which resides in a different *ekpā*. The groups of craftsmen also bear more special allegiance to the royal house in whose *ekpā* they live and with the ancestor of which they associate their coming to Bida and the foundation of their guild. But over and above this party allegiance guilds and guild-sections are closely linked with the ruling king of Nupe. For the king and the court represent the most important customers of the Bida craftsmen. All orders which the court intends to place are given through the guild-head, who guarantees their execution and acts as an official 'controller' of his group of craftsmen.

A position similar to that held by the guild-heads is also assigned to the head of the Bida brokers, the *Etsu Dilali*, who again plays the part of an agent of the king in all matters concerning commerce and trade in the capital.

[1] The organization of the Bida craft-guilds will be described in more detail in Chapter xiv.

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We shall see later that the explanation of this incorporation of artisans and brokers in the rigid bureaucracy of the kingdom lies in the control which the state exercises over crafts and merchandise; only by means of a control of this kind could the head of this warlike state secure an unimpeded supply of the commodities that were vital to the court and the state: arms, clothes, and saddles for the soldiers, food for the huge capital, and the luxuries that were needed for the display of royal power and wealth. We find convincing evidence for this interpretation in the fact that the different crafts are not of equal standing. Some rank higher than others, and this grading is not correlated with economic success: the very prosperous butchers are last on this list, blacksmiths and brassmiths, on the other hand, head the list, 'for they are makers of arms'. Only the glass-makers, a strongly independent and important craft, stand aloof from this order of craft-guilds. This is a list of the craft-guilds in Bida, with the titles of the guild-heads, arranged in order of precedence.

The figure in brackets shows the number of *ekpā* in which they live. The titles of the guild-heads are given in italics.

Brassworkers (2): *Muku.*
Blacksmiths (3): *Dokodza.*
Carpenters and Builders (1): *Egbaba.*
Barber-Doctors (3): *Sokyara.*
Beadworkers (2): *Majī Lantana.*
Leatherworkers (scattered in the town): formerly *Majī Kimpa.*
Weavers (3): *Leshe, Majī, Ndakó.*
Butchers (3): *Sonfawa.*
Glass-makers (1): *Masagá.*

SLAVERY

The lowest in the complex order of social classes in Nupe are the slaves (*wuši*, as against *egi*, freeman, lit. child). But in this one class there are shades and distinctions of social status. Some slaves have risen to positions of wealth and influence. Others have remained menial workers in the households and on the farms of their masters. Pre-British Nupe numbered its slaves by the thousands. Twenty to thirty slaves was a moderate average for the household of a man of consequence. The prosperous craftsmen of Bida town, blacksmiths and weavers, always had slaves to work for them; even in villages one found households with one or two slaves.

The people of Nupe obtained their slaves by two methods: first, there were the slaves captured in the war, who became the property of the man to whose share in the booty they had fallen; and second, there were slaves bought in the markets of Bida.[1] The majority of the latter, it seems, were slaves sold by their captors—noblemen who had taken more slaves than they needed for their household. Slaves were also sold abroad, mostly to the south. Many Nupe men of rank were engaged in

[1] Lander reports that 200 slaves were on sale in the market of Rabá, the then capital of Nupe (op. cit. iii, p. 313).

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Beni and re-established the integrity of the Beni confederacy in the form of a royal domain. *Etsu* Maliki, levying tax upon tax on a country depleted by civil war, and having to defend a weakened kingdom both against powerful feudal lords and a restive population, invented a new system of government: he now applied the *ajele* system which was formerly restricted to the Outside Peoples to the kingdom itself. He divided the country into six large districts placed in charge of his delegates—trusted slaves, who, accompanying the fief-holders on their tax-collecting expeditions from fief to fief, collected the royal tax at the head of an armed force strong enough to cow into submission rebellious subjects as well as any too independent feudal lords.[1] When *Etsu* Abubakari came to the throne, he found all the wells of supply dried up. The taxing system of his predecessors had left nothing in the country that could be made into money—nothing except human beings. He started raiding his own provinces to find slaves for the market, breaking down the most fundamental distinction of political status, that between the citizens of the kingdom proper and the conquered *zaži kati*. But, my informant added philosophically when he finished his sad story: 'A gown is dirty—you wash it; behold, the water is dirty—with what are you going to wash the water?'

In this ever-changing pattern of feudal administration the capital stands somewhat apart, being administered directly by the king and his officers of state. The threefold territorial and tribal division of the kingdom into an innermost core, a kingdom 'proper', and an outside area reappears on a smaller scale in the division of Bida and its population: here we have *ba nîn*, the Inner City, where the Beni of pre-Fulani Bida live; the Greater Bida, and finally the Strangers' Quarter, *lálemi*. But the order of status and prerogatives is not the same. Greater Bida included all the people who had come to Bida when it became the capital of the kingdom—the members of the ruling class, Fulani and Nupe nobility, with all their followers, hangers-on, with traders, Mallams, warriors, drummers. A privileged class here again, this group was free from all taxation, and this privilege also extended to all settlements which they founded, the *tunga* in the country, which were worked by their dependants, slaves, and serfs. The Nupe craft-guilds which had come with the Fulani rulers from the former capital of the kingdom, Rabá, were equally exempted from tax save for an annual 'salute' to the *Etsu*. To the people of *ba nîn* the people of Greater Bida, Fulani and Nupe alike, are 'strangers'. But in the kingdom they themselves, *kintsoži*, Owners of the Land, were a group deprived of all privileges. They were taxed exactly as the other peasants in the country; and so also, by gate-tolls and market dues, which were collected by the king's police force, were all Nupe from the country who came to sell their goods in Bida market.

Finally, there are the strangers—'real' strangers—of whom this cosmopolitan capital was (and is) always full: people from Hausa and Bornu, Arabs from the Sudan and Tripoli, Yoruba from the south.

[1] These districts were: Cekpā (the country of Patigi), Gbakokpā (Badeggi and Kacha), Eggā, Beni, Kyedye, and Kusopā.

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merly used to entrust the discovery and punishment of witches had been forbidden some ten years previously. The modern method of obtaining protection against a witch, through the medium of the law courts, had evidently failed. Moreover, the people were aware of the enmity that existed between their patron and a powerful faction at the king's court, especially between the *Sokyara* and a certain favourite of the ruling *Etsu*, the *Uban Dawaki*, who had recently obtained his rank by what had seemed to many gross favouritism. The action of the *Alkali*, who was known to belong to the same faction, was supposed to be prompted by the wish to please the *Etsu*'s favourite and to discredit his rival. Enraged, and despairing of any other way out, the people took the law into their own hands and stoned the alleged witch and her daughters on their way home from the courthouse. Then the fight between the two factions flared up openly. Although certain members of the king's household had, as it was revealed later during the official investigation, taken part in the stoning of the witches, the *Etsu* accused the *Sokyara* and had him and his whole family arrested. The *Sokyara* and his brother managed to escape, and hid in their house. When this became known in the town the people of the *Uban Dawaki* faction thought this a good opportunity to deal the rival faction their death-blow. They set fire to the house of the *Sokyara*, who sought safety in flight while his brother died in the flames. Later the *Uban Dawaki* party tried to throw the blame on the *Sokyara* and accused him of having himself started the fire. Bida was in upheaval, the *Etsu* powerless, or pretending to be powerless, and only after the sternest measures could the government establish peace.

But we need not go to this extreme case to demonstrate the reality of this system of political factions.[1] Extend the 'circles within circles' of patronage and clientship wider and wider till they are bounded by the widest circumference—the three dynastic *ekpā*—and you understand their full import. Patronage and clientship are only small meshes in a texture which envelops the whole social life of the kingdom.

SOCIAL CLASS IN NUPE

The foregoing description has revealed a system of social gradation of remarkable thoroughness and indeed conspicuousness. We can speak of Nupe as a typical class society. But hitherto we have touched upon only one aspect of social stratification, namely, social differentiation so far as it results from differentiation in political rights and duties. We have studied social barriers—the barriers of rank and grade—where they are pivoted in the political structure. We have yet to learn the full extent of their influence upon the life of society at large and their relation to other trends of social stratification.

Social class is a complex phenomenon, the resultant of many factors,

[1] There is another hardly less drastic illustration: in April 1936 the same *Uban Dawaki* fell ill. At once rumour had it that he had been poisoned by the *Maiyaki*, an old enemy of his who was said to be jealous of the large following which the *Uban Dawaki*, though his junior in rank, could boast. That the medical officer diagnosed lung trouble did little to abate the rumour.

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565 chiefly political, economic, occupational, and educational.[1] But so is the widest constellation defined on the basis of similarity or diversity of conduct—culture. The essence of social class lies in the specific fashion in which these various factors appear combined. To understand it fully we must view social class under two aspects. The first is that of firmly established and comparatively permanent differences in actual conduct—differences in standards of living, in habitual behaviour, occupation, and moral values.[2] The second aspect is that of the social agency which attaches to these differences of conduct the index 'inferior' or 'superior', and makes them reflect different grades on a common scale of values. Were we dealing only with differences of the first order we should be describing merely different cultural groups in which life is lived in different fashion, in which different customs are observed and different values valid. What turns mere cultural differences into differences of conduct typical of social class is the loss or absence of their self-contained and largely unconscious nature. Their permanence is no longer, as it were, self-chosen. The 'cultural' differences are now conceived of as results of unequal advantage and opportunity, and they are never allowed to lose their significance as different grades in the 'common scale'. It lies in the nature of things that this common scale, which depends essentially on the demonstrability of unequal opportunities, should rest above all on political and economic factors. The essence of class (as of any group) lies in the consciousness of group membership; the consciousness of class is the consciousness of this 'common scale of values'.

Let us examine first the social mechanism which maintains and propagates the consciousness of the common scale. It is essentially an educational mechanism (in the widest sense of the word). While perpetuating the various cultural traits characteristic of social class it perpetuates at the same time the common perspective from which these traits are set off as traits valued more or less highly by the society. One of the most efficient instruments of this mechanism is the convention of class symbolism and class etiquette, which not only regulates the intercourse between the classes, but also serves to demonstrate the reality of class barriers.

[291] Nupe society is plentiful in such symbols of class distinction. The collective name for nobility, *rowni*, 'turban', marks already one of these outward signs of class: it refers to the turban of glazed blue cloth which only members of the nobility may wear. Another prerogative of rank is the right to carry a sword, or rather, have it carried by one's sword-bearer, the *zagi* (lit. 'little person', i.e. 'page'), and to appear on horseback on all official occasions. With regard to these emblems of rank the Nupe have kept abreast of the times: a novel symbol of status is an alarum clock, put in a little wooden case, which body-servants of men of rank carry after their masters.

[1] M. Ginsberg, *Sociology*, 1934, p. 162.

[2] Cf. M. Ginsberg, op. cit., p. 159: 'To the outward observer class is primarily a matter of behaviour, speech, dress, education, and especially habits of social intercourse.'

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Or, in the sphere of etiquette: men of equal rank greet each other by cowering low (women go down on one knee) for half a minute or longer while exchanging the formulae of greeting and, if they are well acquainted, stretching out their hands several times in succession and lightly touching each other's fingers. A man of lower rank when meeting his social superior will bow very low or kneel down, and only if the difference of rank is slight or obviated by personal intimacy (as between a *bara* and his patron), will he venture to offer his hand. If he is on horseback, he will dismount; if he is wearing sandals, he will take them off, though it may be on the road, and put them beside him; if he enters the house of his social superior, he will keep close to the door, squatting there till he is summoned to come near. The man of higher rank will stand or sit still, or make a short perfunctory gesture of bowing, and hardly move his arm to meet the other man's hand. When sitting together in a group, the man of low rank always sits slightly behind the man of higher rank. In the presence of the *Etsu*, *Alkali*, the highest ranks, or royal princes, you may not rest your arms on the floor—this would be disrespectful: the proper posture is to squat cross-legged, the arms folded in your lap, and to bend forward a little so that it should not seem as if you were looking straight at your superior. The *Ndeji* and *Maiyaki* were the only men whom I have seen behave really freely in the presence of the king; all others, even the *Alkali* and the royal princes, acted in a conspicuously submissive and slightly constrained manner.

That one addresses one's superior always through a third person is a common feature of African etiquette. So is, I believe, the custom of pulling the sleeve or a cloth over one's hand when offering a gift to a person of superior rank. Of gifts as a symbol of Nupe class etiquette there is more to say. In Nupe (as in the whole of Northern Nigeria) kola-nuts are the commodity most universally used for gifts and presents. To announce your visit or to invite somebody's visit, to win the favour of another man or to express your appreciation of another man's services, you send a present of kola-nuts. Their quality and amount reflect precisely the social status of donor and receiver.

I have already mentioned the existence in Nupe of two kinds of kola-nuts, the cheap southern variety, and the expensive kola-nut from Laboži; the latter, as we have seen, could be obtained only by, or through, the *Etsu* himself—presents of Laboži kola-nuts were thus symbols of royal favour, and unobtainable by anyone who was not in one way or another connected with the court. When I attended the *Sallah* at the *Etsu*'s court in 1936, he had two bowls (teapots, as a matter of fact) full of kola-nuts in front of him, one filled with Laboži nuts and the other with the small cheaper kind. To watch him distribute the kola-nuts—the kind and amount as well as the gestures which accompanied the gifts—was to watch the rank system of Nupe come alive. He presented ten Laboži nuts through a servant to all the higher rank-holders, and five in the same manner to the less exalted officers of state. He then gave one especially big one with his own hands to the men of highest position—the *Ndeji*, *Maiyaki*, *Alkali* (and myself)—and threw one into the lap of favourites and friends whose rank called less for formality. Finally,

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565 576 431 small kola-nuts, in fives or tens, were handed out to messengers, dancers, guild-heads, and other people of lower rank.

565 576 533 Even language and music are used as symbols of class. There exist in Nupe special drum-rhythms, *take*, greeting formulae, *kirari* (Hausa, lit. 'calls'), and songs which are linked with certain noble families and important ranks. As soon as a family comes to power or a man receives rank and title, the drummers of Bida will compose such *take* and *kirari* in their honour. You can, in fact, have them made to order, at various prices; but an influential person will not need to order them, for the drummers, counting on his patronage, will supply him at once with this musical salute. Some of the *take* and *kirari* which one can hear to-day date back to pre-Fulani times; others were composed recently. Whenever a member of these noble families attends a festivity, the drummers would announce his arrival by playing 'his' *take* and singing 'his' *kirari*, and the 'master of ceremonies', who is always present at such gatherings, would recite a long list of illustrious ancestors to whom the nobleman can lay claim, the ranks which he had held, and the deeds which he achieved. Lastly, the Nupe address each other by titles only, and never by name, if the person addressed bears a title. Special formulae of greeting are linked with every rank, and thus mark position on the social scale by the most obvious system of signs—everyday speech.

565 576 Class symbols and class etiquette shade over into the more substantial differences of class. Behaviour which is pressed into the service of class manifestation becomes indistinguishable from behaviour which results from differences in social and economic advantage. The right to carry a sword or appear everywhere on horseback presupposes the economic ability to acquire these 'emblems of rank'. Submissive behaviour of a client towards his patron, or a member of the lower class towards a man of rank, is determined as much by the convention of class etiquette as by the special interest of gaining favour in the eyes of a person of consequence. Here we are dealing with the other aspect of class differentiation, those 'cultural' differences which are, or become, typical of different classes. They revolve round the two pivots: political and economic structure.[1] They involve the existence of political prerogatives and the varying measures of individual liberty and mastery over one's own destiny, enjoyed by the different classes. Here we can outline the existing classes of Nupe society. We have met their protagonists already: the ruling class of the kingdom, rich absentee landlords, men whose occupation was war and slave-raiding, and, low down on the social scale, commoners and peasants, heavily taxed, and gaining a scanty livelihood rendered insecure by the very facts that add power and prestige to the ruling class. We have also met the craftsmen in the town, who share some of the privileges of the nobility, and the Mohammedan intelligentsia who can attach themselves to the highest stratum irrespective of

565 [1] The two structures do not define identical strata, nor is the economic differentiation invariably reducible to political prerogatives. However, we will leave the examination of the exact relation between the two 'pivots' of social stratification for a later chapter.

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their class origin. There is no sphere of life, not even an ordinary social gathering, in which the representatives of the various classes can meet, as it were, on 'neutral ground'.

The social stratification stretches beyond the formalized rank system embodied in the political structure. It embraces the whole country and absorbs and reinterprets in its own sense the cultural configuration of Nupe at large. On this wider scale the commoners of the town, the people of no name and title, rank higher than the people and tribes outside the capital, with their petty village titles and offices. The citizens of Bida look down upon the *gberiši*, the 'heathen' in the villages, ridiculing their habits and character, their fashions and the way they talk, their lack of education and 'urbanity'.

These differences of customs and habits are real enough. But they are underlined on the part of the Bida people by that credulity and fondness of exaggeration which we encountered already in the discussion of the village community and which, here even more strongly, expresses the biased self-centred interest of a group strongly conscious of its cultural identity. I have recorded many sensational accounts of the religious customs of the *gberiši* in which the Bida people firmly believe, unaware, or unwilling to admit, that they are quite untrue. Bida informants told me that among the peasants and pagans women practise the craft of medicine and not men as in Bida—another statement which I could easily disprove. Or I was warned not to believe anything that villagers say—'they are all liars'. Even if it were possible to test quantitatively this collective libel, it would, I am afraid, hardly reveal any real difference between town and country. What I have called, in the discussion of the village community, an ideology sustaining the assertion of group identity subserves here the assertion of (in a loose sense) class distinctions.

To return to the real, concrete, cultural differences linked with class. The framework of status which we have outlined is filled out with a multitude of minor traits, differences of conduct, extending even to walks of life which may appear only remotely connected with the central political and economic structure. We shall meet with these differences in every stage of our investigation; let me anticipate here a few typical instances as they would strike the observer of Nupe everyday life. He would note class differences even in one of the most elementary wants—nutrition: rich and poor have different food habits. The poor eat little meat, chicken very rarely (unless for religious reasons); but meat cooked in palm-oil is eaten every day by the wealthy, and chicken-and-rice, the most delicious food the Nupe know, comes on the table at least once a week. In Bida the sorghum or millet grain is always milled to fine flour; in some peasant districts it is boiled unmilled—a preparation of food which the more refined despise, although it is undoubtedly of higher nutritive value. The people of Bida drink palm-wine, the peasants in the districts feast on sorghum-beer.

Again, in the matter of recreation: among the peasants the men dance to the music of flutes and drums, or the women sing to the clapping of hands or the beating of upturned calabashes. Among the sophisticated

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565 517 184 people of Bida professional women singers, accompanied by their own drummers, perform for an audience which pays for its pleasures. The uneducated pagans like to sit together on afternoons and evenings in front of their houses, chat or weave mats, or just enjoy the peace of these hours of leisure. The educated Mohammedans meet in the house of a Mallam and read with him the holy books of Islam, using even their leisure hours for furthering their education.

565 291 184 As regards dress: a man of standing would always, even in the privacy of his home, wear trousers and the flowing white robe, and would never appear before guests and strangers without turban. Peasants and commoners normally wear a loin-cloth and a blue cloth thrown over the shoulder, and the blue Phrygian cap which is said to be the traditional head-gear of Nupe. Only on state occasions would they don robe and turban.

565 177 184 304 195 People of rank have adopted, with Mohammedanism, many features of Hausa culture. In their families the Hausa custom of removing the uvula of small children is practised—a custom absent among the lower classes and unknown among the peasants. They are fond of using Hausa words and phrases; for expressions concerning the delicate topic of sex they invariably use Hausa or Arabic circumlocutions. They despise the peasants and uneducated people of the lower classes who use the crude literal expression, and who cannot embellish their speech with the more elegant phrases borrowed from Hausa.

565 184 The various features enumerated above are clearly not of the same order. Characteristic though they are of the standards valid in the different strata of Nupe society they are not equally reducible to the central facts of class structure—political and economic conditions. The evaluation of certain habits as inferior or superior is as much a matter of convention as a result of social or economic inequality. That the poor man cannot afford meat or chicken-and-rice is due to his poverty; but the preference for milled or unmilled grain or for palm-wine or sorghum-beer respectively, is a matter of taste and habit, i.e. a 'cultural' trait pure and proper. Yet rendered permanent by education, linked with habitual group-behaviour which in other, more vital, spheres of life positively reflects economic or social prerogatives, these smaller traits, too, gain the significance of class-determined behaviour. Here we grasp another aspect of class differentiation. I have said that where the attribute of inferiority or superiority is disregarded, differences of habit and living conditions in general are reduced to cultural differences in the narrow sense. This gains special significance in a society like Nupe, which has grown out of a conglomerate of various tribal groups, each with its own more or less specific culture. Some of the food habits of the 'poor' peasants are indeed the original food habits of cultural groups which have been incorporated into the kingdom. I have mentioned that the Phrygian cap, worn by peasants and commoners, is regarded as the traditional head-dress of the country. Their 'uncouth' manners, their 'primitive' customs, are part of the pagan peasant culture of the country. Similarly turban and flowing robes, or the appreciation of professional musicians and Mohammedan learning, reflect the preferences of a specific cultural

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group, the 'town culture' typical of Northern Nigeria. These habits and customs exist, as it were, in their own right, quite apart from questions of economic or political opportunity. But as in the growth of the kingdom certain customs and habits have become representative of the *élite*, they have set the standard of cultural desirability and superiority in general. They have imparted to habits and customs which differ from the standard the stigma of lower, less 'respectable' ways of life. In this sense, then, class differentiation as we find it in present-day Nupe can be said to represent a direct result of the growth of the state.

The intensity of class cohesion and the vividness of class consciousness are determined by 'the amount and ease of social mobility', that is, inter-class movement.[1] We have denied to the economic and social stratification that obtains in the Nupe village the character of a social class, on the grounds that the higher and highest social orders were potentially attainable to all—universal mobility contradicts the conception of social class. Exclusion of all social mobility, on the other hand, would turn social class into hereditary caste. Nupe society, a true class society, steers a middle course.

The social classes in Nupe represent to a large extent self-recruited, closed groups. A man born of commoners as a rule remains a commoner, a craftsman a craftsman, and the ranks of nobility are filled with men of noble birth. But there exists promotion from grade to grade within the class, and a certain amount of inter-class mobility. Inter-class mobility in the fullest sense, that is, formal adoption into the higher orders, is attained, as we have seen, through service in war and, to less extent, through wealth and clientship. Its scope is narrow and closely controlled: there exist only thirty to forty ranks to which an 'outsider' may aspire, and only seven out of the thirty-seven civil and military ranks enumerated in our lists were granted to men whose families had held no rank previously. Moreover, adoption into the titled classes means only gaining a first foothold on the long social ladder. All social rise possible in Nupe is rigidly canalized by the hierarchy of ranks and grades. Here, viewed from the angle of social mobility, the Nupe rank system reveals its full significance: it controls and restricts as much as it aids social advancement. In the interest of governing the extensive kingdom, carrying on its wars, and administering its subject groups, political power had to be distributed and delegated. Individuals whose services were of value had to be attracted by the promise of admission to privileged positions. But by making social rise subject to the formal investiture and, above all, by admitting individuals only gradually, through a step-by-step promotion, to increased power, the ruling class could regulate the infiltration of new blood as well as the accumulation of power by its members. We have seen that ranks and promotion are subject to changing political fortune; even the meaning of ranks and offices may change under different sovereigns. Recognition can be withheld or withdrawn from men who might prove dangerous or from families already too powerful. The hierarchy of ranks thus helps to pre-

[1] M. Ginsberg, op. cit., p. 163.

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565 serve the precarious balance of power in the feudal state. It becomes, in
555 the hands of the established ruling group, an efficient weapon to safe-
guard their class privileges.

565 Social mobility of a more fluid, indirect kind, which admits individuals
186 to a close association with the privileged classes and indirectly to a certain share in their privileges, reaches a much larger proportion of the population. It is upheld by the institution of clientship and by the existence of the Mallam intelligentsia 'between the classes'. The possibilities of social mobility, above all, the extensive possibilities of this indirect mobility, account for the lack of cohesion among the lower classes of Nupe, or at least of Bida. The conspicuous symbolism of rank and the rigid definition of the social estates cannot but stimulate class-consciousness: commoners will always describe themselves as *tálaka*, and men of rank will leave you in no doubt about their consequential position. But this class-consciousness is blurred by thoughts and prospects of a social career that might raise anyone to a higher estate. Concern about betterment rather than sentiments of group solidarity define the nature of class-consciousness in Nupe. This can be seen most clearly in the attitude of the younger generation, who are just planning their future career. Only in two social groups do we find a more strongly pronounced and self-contained consciousness of common fate and common, class-bound interests; they are characteristically groups in which mobility, direct or indirect, plays hardly any part—the closed group of guild-organized artisans and (in the framework of their scattered communities) the peasantry.

565 How far social mobility took the form of local mobility, that is, of a movement to the town in the attempt to bridge over the cultural and social gulf between townspeople and peasantry, we cannot say. If it existed, it could only have been of very limited scope. For there were strong natural limits to such a development, above all, the scarcity of land near the capital.

Now to be complete and convincing, social rise must go hand in hand with assimilation to the habits and modes of life typical of the higher classes. This, in Nupe, proves no stumbling-block. The familiar instances of 'parvenus' who, though adopted into the higher social order, do not fit into the picture of its social life are unknown. The explanation is that cultural assimilation of this kind is much more widespread than actual mobility. The mechanisms of social mobility which we have enumerated all accord their benefits to individuals, not to groups; on the contrary, individuals may succeed where groups (local communities, tribal sections) would fail to achieve that improvement of social conditions and that increased security bound up with classes. But the assimilation of which we have just spoken must be regarded as a qualified form of social mobility which includes groups and whole sections of the population. Whole groups are free at least to imitate the external characteristics of the higher social orders. Where economic conditions allow it commoners and peasants adopt habits and modes of life of their betters—fashions in dress and housing, their way of talk, their food habits, and the forms of entertainment which they patronize. They also

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adopt, even more eagerly, the religious practice of the higher and highest classes, Mohammedanism. This is not 'real' social mobility; it serves only to blur the border-line between the strata. It involves attachment to a higher stratum only in the sense of external closeness and assimilation.

The assimilation achieved is irregular and of very unequal significance. Yet it is prompted by a definite motive running through the whole society—self-enhancement. The readiness of groups to identify themselves culturally with the representative stratum reveals an incentive to overcome that heterogeneity of cultures and groups in which we have grasped the essence of state structure. Potentially, this incentive may carry forms of cultural reorientation capable of wielding more intensive, more real, commonness. To examine how and how far this potentiality is utilized by the political system is to examine the crucial problem of this discussion: the dynamic relation between political integration and the heterogeneous raw material out of which it must fashion its unity.

BINDING FORCES

What then is the specific apparatus of control by means of which this heterogeneous society, severely divided by gulfs of culture, ethnic extraction, community, and class, maintains itself as a unit? And to what extent does it draw into its orbit and use for its own support these other non-political configurations and spheres of social life? When examining the political organization of the Nupe village from this viewpoint we discovered that there the basis of political control is extended to its widest possible limit: political organization utilizes the integrative forces of community life at large; it organizes into a unit what is integrated into the same unit by every existing institution. It might very well seem from our foregoing analysis of the Nupe state that here we have the exact opposite. A state machinery which concentrates political power in the hands of a small *élite* and ignores—save in order to transform into class barriers—tribal and cultural identity, seems committed to the narrowest system of political control: by coercion and physical force.

However, this section will show that such conclusions would be incorrect. One might, on general principles, reason that no state could afford to rely solely on coercive measures; and that it would rather utilize coercion only as a 'short cut' to bring about sentiments which, 'once established and sanctified, . . . may well flourish without compulsion, glorified as loyalty to a sovereign king or a national flag'.[1] A state that would disdain to call to assistance these bonds of inner unity seems to jeopardize continuously its safety, and to risk being shattered and broken up by unrest and revolts, possibly beyond repair. Such tension and unrest seems indeed characteristic of the political history of Nupe. But the historian would have to point out also that with all these grave disturbances Nupe kingdom yet maintained itself as a unit. Even when the Fulani took over the rule, testing most severely an already strained

[1] R. Lowie, *The Origin of the State*, 1927, p. 117.

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of the office of the village *Sagi* and to emphasize its harmless business side instead.

Thus we find that in many Nupe villages an efficient business-like head of the women has succeeded the *Lelu* or *Sagi* of the old type. In other places, again, the people would not admit the magic significance of the woman's rank. Yet the strength of the belief, concealed though it may be, was shown in a witchcraft case which I happened to witness in Gbajibo, a small village on the Niger above Jebba. Here the *Sagi*, the very business-like head of the local women, was yet behind the public outcry against an alleged witch. The women much more than the men were leading in this persecution; they had been the first to ostracize the victim; and when I questioned them about their motives, they all referred me to the *Sagi*. Her own motive appeared to be jealousy of the other woman, the alleged witch, in whom she saw a dangerous rival, possibly even for the position of a *Sagi*.

The office of the *Sagi*, modern or traditional, is invariably a much-coveted one. Her moral hold over the women, as our example has shown, is complete. It is equally strong in the less sinister spheres of communal life: like the *Sonya* in Bida, the village *Sagi* advises the women, organizes women's work, arbitrates between them, and receives small presents from every business transaction which they carry through.

MARRIAGE AND STATUS

The ranks and offices already discussed all belong to married women. But we have seen that they represent forms of status which the women acquire in their own right, on the grounds of descent, or personal ability, or both, independent of their status as wives of men who occupy this or that social position. We shall see later that the same principle applies also to the status won by wealth. In particular the status by descent of the Nupe women is affected but little by marriage, i.e. by the social status of their husbands; in so far as it is so affected, this change is in the direction of social advancement. Women of low birth who marry above their status into the aristocracy can claim the status of their husbands; and women who marry beneath their station do not lose their status but raise their husbands to their own social level. The men will be allowed to share most of the social and political privileges of the class into which they marry. Two cases were reported to me in which the men could even acquire *saraki* ranks after marrying a woman of the *saraki* nobility. But even if the men are not admitted fully into the titled class, their children would always acquire the status of their mother. Daughters may thus inherit the status of their fathers, and both sons and daughters that of their mothers; husbands may be adopted into the social sphere of their wives and parents-in-law. This social regulation may seem surprising in an otherwise strongly patrilineal society. But this one-sided interpretation of the change of status that goes with marriage is not an expression of matrilineal kinship tendencies, nor of 'feminist' leanings in Nupe society (though we shall find ample evidence of these, too); rather it expresses political

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562 554 565 interests, deep-seated class sentiments, which cannot admit of a lowering of status in any one high-born. Yet if, owing to the rigid class system, marriage between the classes is thus turned into a potential instrument of social advancement, its utilization in this sense is also rigidly controlled.

582 565 For marriage in the aristocracy, especially in the royal nobility, is to a very large extent endogamous—'family marriage' as the Nupe call it. As the Nupe-Fulani regard themselves all as related, and as most families of the nobility are more or less closely related by marriage, practically all 'family marriages' of this kind are at the same time marriages within the ruling class. The Fulani in Nupe, moreover, following Mohammedan practice, encourage parallel cousin marriage (which is forbidden by the traditional marriage rules of the country) as well as cross-cousin marriage, and thus widen enormously the scope of 'family marriages', especially between descendants in the male line. Family marriage in Nupe, finally, is characterized by a much lower bride-price than that paid in ordinary exogamous marriage. This leads to the rather paradoxical situation, on which my informants invariably commented, that the wealthiest and proudest classes of the country favour 'cheap' marriage, while the humble commoners and peasants are committed mostly to a very high bride-price. The explanation is that the low bride-price in this case supplies an additional incentive for endogamous marriage—'class endogamous' marriage, as it were—and thus for the preservation of the social identity of the ruling classes (as well as, incidentally, a strengthening of their group solidarity).[1]

Indeed the counterpart of the incentive of a low bride-price in 'class endogamous' marriages is the 'deterrent' of an exceptionally high bride-price demanded in the case of marriages between the classes, i.e. between men of the *tálaka* class and girls or women of the nobility. Such cases are accordingly rare. Yet we may note that if a chance of such marriage exists, if the girl loved the man sufficiently to overlook the difference in social status, the high bride-price alone proves no obstacle. For friends and relations would join forces to find the money and to enable the ambitious suitor to make his luck by this advantageous marriage. The benefits of his new position would be considered sufficient promise of an eventual ample gratification. One of my Bida servants was an example: the son of a commoner, he had succeeded in winning the love of the daughter of a very high *saraki* and eventually, after considerable difficulties, in marrying her with money borrowed from friends and relations.

The endogamous marriage rules only ensure that the women of the ruling classes should marry within the class; they do not attempt to exclude the less dangerous form of dilution implied in the marriages of the men to women from other classes and strata. Indeed, the polygamous nature of marriage in Nupe, which forces the men to seek wives

[1] One of my informants who belonged to the *saraki* class even went so far as to explain the whole principle of having a different bride-price for 'family' and 'outside' marriages as a political measure taken by the *saraki* and Fulani nobility with the purpose of preventing commoners from marrying into their class. Though incorrect as regards the facts, this interpretation is significant as an expression of the dominant class sentiments.

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from outside their social group, precludes an application of 'class endogamy' in this sense. Marriage of this kind between the strata has reached enormous dimensions. And this shows, incidentally, that the rule of 'class endogamy' serves, even in the case of the Fulani rulers, the interest only of a social identity and solidarity and not, as one might perhaps assume, of racial purity.

POLYGAMY AND SEX MORALITY

In Nupe as in most polygamous societies in which marriage is by bride-price (and by high bride-price at that) the number of wives a man possesses becomes an infallible index of wealth and status. In the peasant districts, where we find comparatively little inequality of wealth, the range of polygamy also varies in narrow limits. Genealogies which I collected in the two Nupe villages Doko and Kutigi show the following range of polygamy (the figures refer to middle-aged or old men, both of the living and previous generation):

	Number of wives						
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*Over 5*	*Total*
Number of cases	68	96	20	11	1	1	179

The average is thus 2.1 wives per man.[1] To quote a similar average for Bida would be meaningless: the great inequality of wealth and status is reflected in the widely varying range of polygamy. In the houses of the *talakaži*, the 'poor ones', monogamy is the rule; in the 'middle class' the conditions are much the same as in the peasant districts; but as regards the men of substance and rank, though it would be correct to say that they have rarely less than four wives, the upper limits of their polygamy are very fluid, and cannot even be ascertained with any accuracy. Popular notions attribute to certain royal princes and, above all, to the kings of Nupe, numbers of wives varying between 100 and 200. Even the late *Etsu* Saidu is reported to have had sixty wives. Discretion forbade any direct inquiries. Besides, the vagueness in the legal definition of 'wife' and 'marriage' in these cases would have detracted from the value of the information. According to Mohammedan law a man may have four wives only. But this rule is easily circumvented by limiting the number of legal wives whom one marries with religious rites to four (or four at a time), and relegating the rest to the position of mere concubines. In the houses of the higher as well as of lesser nobility I found

[1] The range of polygamy varies to some extent locally. In Mokwa, for example, I obtained the following figures:

	Number of wives						
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*Over 5*	*Total*
Number of cases	44	28	3	3	..	..	60

The average is, again, 2 wives per man.

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In the houses of the higher as well as of lesser nobility I found
595 the practice of divorcing ageing wives and replacing them with more
565 attractive girls. The ex-wife, especially if she had borne children, would
586 be allowed to stay on in the house and would continue to be supported by the husband, or ex-husband—a wife on pension, as it were. The late *Etsu* of Agaie was partial to a different method: he used to marry off his 'pensioned' wives, at very low bride-price, to *talakaži* and peasants, who were either glad to find a 'cheap' wife or else afraid to refuse so exalted a gift. Among the upper classes of Bida old men, long past marrying
[832] age, would still add young girls to the number of their 'wives'. Aphrodisiacs (which one can buy from the barber-doctors in Bida) and stimulants (above all, kola-nuts) keep alive their sexual appetite. Old S., who died in 1935, 70 years old, had married a new young wife only the previous year, and a son was born to him ('to him' at least in the legal sense) posthumously.

595 This classbound polygamy deeply affects the sex morality of the
837 women and, indirectly, of the society at large. Respect for chastity and the sanctity of matrimonial ties dominates the traditional moral con-
831 cepts of Nupe. But this 'double morality' of a social system which legitimizes unrestricted sexual desire of the men in one privileged stratum, but would force similar desires in other strata into the realm of illegitimate and indictable action, is in danger of defeating itself. In Bida it has clearly provided a strong stimulus to extra-marital sex relations in all classes. Moreover, the starved sexuality of the women in the large polygamous households strives to find an outlet.[1] The insecurity of their legal position tends to remove the barriers of conventional matrimonial morality. Thus many of the younger wives or concubines seek satisfaction in illegitimate relationships and even semi-professional prostitution.

548 Adultery, including adultery in this extreme form of semi-profes-
837 sional prostitution, is extremely widespread among women of every status. Prostitution in the strict sense (practised as a profession and in brothels) does not occur in Bida. But we have heard that the kola-nut vendors on Bida night-market, all married women, are prostitutes at the same time.[2] We shall learn later of the close association between women's trade and prostitution (and the large majority of Bida women are traders of one kind or another). 'Every woman', an informant told me, 'whom you see beautifully dressed in the streets of Bida after dark, is a "bad" woman.' Informants, themselves married men, were all agreed that there were hardly any 'good' women left in Bida. But when I asked them what the husbands were doing about this they said: 'Nothing; what could we do?' Indeed, they can do little but shut their eyes. The
837 obvious alternative, divorce, is impossible in most cases. Poor men
586 cannot afford to divorce their wives, for this would mean forfeiting part
565 of the bride-price and thus their only chance of finding another wife; moreover, the economic dependence of many husbands on their wives (of which we shall hear more in a later chapter) forbids such a course.

[838] [1] In the royal 'harems' homosexual practices—called *madigo* or *lutu* (the Arabic word for homosexuality)—are, in fact, said to occur.

[2] Their 'tariff' is commonly known: it varies between 6*d.* and 1*s.*

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Men who have to uphold their prestige and social position would never risk the publicity and ridicule of divorce proceedings in which they would have to appear in the role of the wronged husband.[1] The amorous affairs of Bida noblemen supply, in fact, an ever-welcome topic for the town gossips. When some years ago two popular noblemen quarrelled, everyone knew that it was about a girl and had the details at their fingertips. Only the men of very great wealth and highest status are in a position to restrain or threaten their unfaithful wives. For one thing, they can afford to forfeit more than one bride-price, and can thus divorce their wives (according to Nupe Mohammedan law) without invoking elaborate public proceedings. Besides, wives and paramours would hesitate to provoke the enmity of these powerful personages. It is not unnatural, then, that (as my informants said) the wives of these men supply the only example of unimpaired marital fidelity in Bida—another no less striking instance of 'double morality'.

If the older married men are either resigned or complacent, the younger men see in illegitimate adventures only an exciting and tempting aspect of Bida life. We shall meet later with their ideal, the dashing young man 'about town' who can 'have' all the women he wants and can boast of his conquests. The women who avails herself of the loosened marriage ties may be talked about and called (behind her back) a 'bad woman'—*nyizagi banza*, a 'worthless woman'. But in their ordinary behaviour towards these women, when meeting them in the street or in the house of a mutual friend, the men will never fail in their respect towards them or betray by a sign their moral prejudices. This ambiguous attitude is symptomatic of a society which, though still conscious of its traditional dogmatic appreciation of chastity, is yet adapting itself to a spreading laxity of morals.

There is indeed evidence to show that sexual licence has been greatly increasing in the last generation or two. But there is also evidence of the fact that sexual licence on a smaller scale and within strictly defined limits enjoyed a legitimate existence in traditional Nupe society. The anomaly of public morals which would condemn sexual licence yet at the same time sanction it in a certain well-defined social domain is familiar to the student of society. In Nupe as in all other societies this qualified admission of sexual licence is due to various social causes. A first cause lies in the nature of sex itself, namely, in the reaction to the restraint on all pre-marital and extra-marital sexual relations which characterizes the traditional sex morality of the people. Another cause is the large floating population in Bida, composed of traders, warriors (formerly), labourers (to-day), that is, men who come to Bida without their wives and depend on prostitution for the satisfaction of their sexual appetite. A third cause is embodied in the institution of female trade. We shall see later that women's trade involves a loosening of matrimonial and family ties and tends to become identified with licentious living. In female trade Nupe society thus has grasped a ready occupational framework for that domain of sanctioned

[1] Clear evidence of this is the scarcity of divorce cases, which form two-thirds of all court cases in Bida, from the houses of the nobility.

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of N.A. Hospital and dispensaries, schools, experimental farms, &c. Part of it is used to build up and maintain a substantial reserve fund to be used for unforeseen expenses, in the case of a famine, and suchlike. The apportionment of the tax revenue, above all the allotment of funds for new enterprises, is subject to the joint approval of *Etsu* and District Officer. It is, in fact, in matters of this nature that the harmonious collaboration of the two men is often put to its most severe test.

The far-reaching social change that the introduction of modern taxation has meant for Nupe kingdom cannot be easily exaggerated. The universal taxation under British rule has completely overthrown the former prerogative of tax exemption enjoyed by the nobility and the population of the town. It is not surprising therefore that these people should still strongly resent this abolition of their privileges. But those who resent it most strongly are not the men 'on the top', but rather the people of inferior status, such as guild-heads and Bida craftsmen, who had not been recompensed as many of the others had been in the share-out of new, well-paid official posts. The old guild-head of the Bida woodworkers once quite violently insulted and attacked me, and with me all White Men, for having robbed him of his former status and privileges. 'Formerly', he shouted at me, 'the other craftsmen would come humbly to my house prostrating themselves before me and would present me with gifts to show their loyalty. To-day I have to pay the same tax as they—can you wonder that they have become arrogant and simply ignore me?' One would expect, then, that peasants and small craftsmen and traders would appreciate the equalizing effect of the present system. This is not wholly so—partly for reasons to be explained presently, but partly also because the change had done away with the former system of voluntary gifts on which so much of their social security used to depend. By these gifts they established a personal link with the men of rank and influence, on whose assistance they could count in many situations when such assistance was of utmost importance. These situations have not and perhaps never will disappear completely. It is not surprising that the people cannot yet fully appreciate the 'impersonality' of the modern system, nor realize fully that in return for their tax-money, paid to an 'impersonal' Administration, they receive things no less valuable than the former personal link with powerful individuals: public security, law courts, roads, hospitals, schools.

Taxation is the most sensitive spot in any governmental system. It is perhaps not to be wondered at that the administration of taxes proved the most dangerous stumbling-block on the path of the young N.A. Native official after official, often in the highest position, has lost his post, and even gone to prison, for embezzling tax-money or levying illicit dues. However, there are two more serious weaknesses inherent in the taxation system—more serious because affecting more deeply the inner structure of the society.

The first concerns the (in my view) disproportionately high taxes in the Emirate. Bida Emirate as it exists to-day is not a rich country, the masses of the people are not well off; the discussion on the economic system will bring ample evidence of this. Nupe country is in this respect

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would happen: 'you give the *egba* half this sum, he will quash the case, and you will still have a profit of 5*s*. Of course, if a larger sum is involved this is not so easy, for such an amount is difficult to hush up, and too many people would know about it.'

The judicial procedure in the capital followed, till recently, two different principles: the *sheri'a gboró*, 'straight judgement', for pagans, and the *sheri'a nya kurani*, 'judgement according to the Koran', for Mohammedans. The former represented the 'customary law' of the country, which would do justice to the local pagan customs; it also implied the oath on the sacred objects of pagan Nupe, especially the chain of Tsoede. The latter followed the written Mohammedan law and implied the oath on the Koran. Punishment of ordinary criminals was performed in the capital, on the open market—be it flogging, *shelá*, or capital punishment. In the case of political offences and in the case of men of rank, royal princes, or members of the high nobility, the execution took place under the cover of night and in the secrecy of their own houses. Whether this 'preferential' treatment expressed a last privilege granted to the ruling classes or whether such secrecy was thought to uphold the morale of the feudal kingdom I cannot say.[1]

All the various crimes and offences listed in our table became actionable only when there was a plaintiff. The state itself did not undertake to prosecute unless it was appealed to first by a person bringing a charge against some other person—with one exception: the crime *lèse-majesté*. The widespread knowledge with regard to this crime and its punishment in districts and groups which certainly never came into personal contact with the king precludes the assumption that in this case, too, the legal executive waited for a concrete charge being brought by the plaintiff in question, i.e. the king. Rather we must assume that the crime became actionable in an absolute sense, whenever and wherever it was committed, provided that witnesses of the act existed. Whether the information about the crime reached the central authority through private information or denunciation, or through the official channels of delegates and sub-delegates, I cannot say; but the important fact is that here the state took the initiative in prosecuting the offender. We have here the instance of an indictable offence in the modern sense of the word—a legal definition unparalleled in any known primitive system of law.

In this comprehensive and strongly centralized jurisdiction the political system of Nupe achieved its strongest hold over the peoples of the kingdom. Here the co-ordination of morality, the uniformity of cultures of which we have spoken, is secured by the most effective weapon, the coercive machinery of state jurisdiction. We possess certain evidence which shows that this comprehensive co-ordination was achieved gradually, and that the political system extended its judicial

[1] I have referred already to the ancient, pre-Fulani, judicial organization of the *ledu*, the 'King's Hangmen', who lived in villages on the Niger and there, far from the king's town, executed the criminals who were condemned to death (see p. 73). It is interesting to mention here certain stories current in Bida which record that the *ledu* organization was still used in the time of *Etsu* Usman against rebels of royal blood, who were imprisoned in Giragi, the *ledu* town closest to Bida.

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It will have been seen already that the land disputes which we have just described reflect more than merely disputable, equivocal land-contracts. The landlords who 'sell' the land are without exception men of the titled classes, courtiers, favourites, or former slaves of the king or of powerful noblemen, and the 'buyers' mostly commoners, peasants who have had no other chance of obtaining additional land. To-day they are coming to realize that their right to the land which they acquire is protected by the Native Court. But till very recently, in order to obtain their rights, they would have had to bribe their way through or to find a protector equal in rank and influence to the landlord who threatened to evict them—a typical source of the institution of clientship, which we discussed in a previous chapter.[1] A final example. A certain farmer had 'bought' land from D., a *bara* of the late *Etsu* Saidu. The *Etsu*, for reasons of his own, refused his confirmation of the deal—D., being a tenant of the *Etsu*, could not transfer the lease without the latter's permission—and the tenant had only one way open: he attached himself to another, more influential, *bara* of the *Etsu* and through him made various gifts to the *Etsu*, over £3 in money, a valuable civet cat, and promised besides an annual rent of two bundles of corn.

Hereditary Land: Secondary Tenantship

Clientship, combined with a métayer arrangement, becomes a factor in land-tenure also in another respect. A commoner who desired more land, or a new piece of land, could give himself into the service or 'patronage' of a landowning overlord and thus secure land as well as political protection. The conditions were: an initial gift in kind as in all pacts of clientship, occasional presents, visits and other expressions of homage, and finally a tithe (*dzankd* again) from his millet or sorghum crop. This submission to patronage was often the only means by which the peasants in Cis-Kaduna could hope to retain their property when threatened with expropriation, and also the only means by which they could secure new land, that is, access to what under tribal conditions would have been a reserve of village land. The necessity of obtaining land and enjoying its secure possession thus constitutes another of the main roots of clientship. The lease of land obtained by these methods is hereditary, and remains in the family, a comparatively safe possession—unless political factors interfere. The tenants are rarely allowed to forget that the relationship between landlord and client implies more than merely a correct commercial relationship. Lack of respect, an apparent failure to render due homage, or behaviour suggestive of changed

Etsu himself suggested that the disputed piece of land (a river grove that was claimed by two neighbouring villages) should be bought for money by one of the parties. The purchase price fixed was 15*s*.

[1] Till very recently no peasant tenant would have dared to invoke the *Etsu*'s or *Alkali*'s help against his landlord; he would have been looked upon as somebody who had broken away from a firmly established tradition of loyalty, one-sided though it was. The tenant in the last example quoted above kept silent for fifteen years; not till 1934 did he venture to bring his case before the court and thus to obtain a final confirmation of his ownership.

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294 They make as much as 1*s.* or 2*s.* on a market day; and shortly before the Great *Sallah*, for a week or ten days, they can reckon upon daily earnings up to 4*s.* Most machine-tailors do not buy their own material, but prefer to make up material brought by the customer, whom they charge a 'wage' (*lada*) of 2*d.* to 4*d.* a cloth. It is not surprising that the men who have taken up this most modern industry are mostly young men. They come partly from tailor families, but partly also—like many other 'free' craftsmen—from other professions and other social classes. The contribution of the 'gentry' is, again, considerable. Two of the five machine-[565] tailors from Bida who are now working on the village market of Jebba Island are descendants of titled families.

435 You can buy a sewing-machine in Bida (second-hand or new) for £2 to £3. Some young men have themselves bought their own sewing-294 machines with money made in wage-labour. More often the sewing-machine is bought by the father of the young man (or occasionally his 593 mother), who by this purchase sets up his son in an independent trade—as blacksmiths or weavers equip their sons with tools and looms to start them on their independent work. Unlike these craftsmen, however, the father of the machine-tailor may provide the machine before his son is married, and expect him then to find himself the money for his bride-price. The son who is yet unmarried may hand over a half or a third of his earnings to his father—but this is not a rigid rule. Married sons work invariably on their own; an occasional gift of five kola-nuts (never [43] more) to the father is an act of filial piety rather than a recognition of 'business relations'.

294 The introduction of sewing-machines gives a new meaning to the question of maintenance of labour. Sewing-machines represent by far the most expensive means of production used in native crafts. They must occasionally be repaired, spare parts have to be bought, and eventually the whole machine will have to be replaced. The cost of maintaining these means of production seems more than balanced by the regular profits derived from the use of the sewing-machines. The question of obsolescence and replacement has not yet become acute. But already the problem of maintenance of labour in this new sense is felt. Blacksmiths and glass-workers, as we have seen, invest only a little money in their means of production—their main capital is labour. Weavers have to purchase looms and thus to invest a certain capital in tools; but specialized skill and training under experienced masters represent as much a 'working capital' as does loom or money. In machine-tailoring the money capital (the purchase money for the sewing-machine) represents the only investment of the craftsman; training and special skill are negligible factors. The money returns are, in fact, disproportionately high, measured by the traditional standards of skill or length of training. Here means of production and profit-bearing capital become one and the same thing. The machine must itself produce the profits out of which it will have to be replaced some day; and, through the medium of the machine, capital must reproduce itself, almost automatically. We discover, in a typical native home industry, the first traces of the modern industrial system.

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three cases) abandon the craft altogether. Pottery also involves a certain co-operation between the women which goes beyond the single household. The pots are made in the house, individually, but the burning of the pots takes place in an open space outside, and in this the women from different compounds work together, building the fire of grass and firewood and using it jointly for the burning of their pots. This co-operation neither expresses kinship and tribal unity, as in the case of the *konú* women dyers, nor is it based on an organized occupational union as in the case of the handicrafts of the men. Rather is it an occasional, free co-operation for the sake of expediency which is suggested by the particular technique of this handicraft.

The question of the limitation of a woman's craft to a particular section of the population reappears, with a different meaning, in weaving. The women's weaving is done on the upright broad loom (21 in. wide), which, though produced to-day by the Bida carpenters, appears to have had its origin in the south, in Yoruba country, where I have also seen it used as a woman's loom. This technique of weaving is said to be comparatively new, and not traditionally Nupe, and may indeed have come to Nupe from Yoruba in the times of the Yoruba wars, through the medium of Yoruba wives and slaves of the Nupe nobility. For women's weaving is restricted to the womenfolk of the upper classes of Nupe society; only wives and daughters of the nobility or the 'intelligentsia' possess a loom and practise the craft. There is, in fact, no house of the upper classes in which you will not find several of these looms being used by girls and women. Conversely, looms and craft are completely absent in the poorer man's home. The technique is handed on from mother to daughter. In very few cases only was I informed that a wife had been taught weaving by her mother-in-law. The profit involved in this work corresponds to the average profit of the men's handicrafts. One big embroidered cloth, 2 yards long, is sold for 10*s.* to 15*s.*, the material costing 5*s.*; the weaving takes thirty days (a cheaper, not embroidered, kind of cloth can be manufactured in half the time), and the profit per day is thus between 2*d.* and 3*d.* This gives us the explanation for the limitation of this craft to a specific social stratum. Only women who have servants (*bara* and formerly slaves) to help in the housework and to run errands for them can find the leisure for this long and delicate work. But the restriction of this woman's craft to one social stratum is only made possible through the existence of a unilateral endogamy—class endogamy—on the part of the women, who rarely marry beneath their station. If I am right, and these looms have been imported into Nupe from Yoruba, we have an interesting instance of class-restricted culture contact, that is, of cultural 'borrowing' which is at once fitted into, and made to subserve, the existing system of rigid social stratification.

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either for oneself or for one's family. One young labourer from the country gave his father 5*s.* out of his weekly wages of 7*s.* to put by for his bride-price; another kept 2*s.* to 3*s.* a month for himself, and gave the rest to his father. Many Bida labourers, on the other hand, used the whole money for themselves; some explained that they had become labourers because there was no money in their old profession, others because they wanted to be independent and because their fathers or elder brothers could not give them as much money as they liked to have.

To summarize: as one would expect, paid labour, especially temporary labour, does not represent a 'real' profession in the sense of an occupation involving special training and selection of workers. It is essentially a stopgap occupation chosen to supplement or replace a failing normal source of income. Owing to the specific composition of Nupe society the new profession is being adopted by certain social groups and strata more than by others. Yet in some respects paid industrial labour must be regarded almost as a modern continuation of forms of occupations which, in the traditional society, bore the same supplementary and stopgap character. As such it appeals strongly to the individual craftsman, to Mallama, and *bara*, who depend for their livelihood on similar forms of unskilled and partly temporary work. It differs from these other occupations, however, in that it is carried out on the road and in the workshop yard instead of in the home, and that it represents heavy manual labour, and not light work which it is easy to combine with a dignified social status. The labourers, unlike the individual craftsmen, can no longer pretend that they belong to the leisured class. If they receive better and more regular pay, they also lose caste. This explains why of the many hundreds of men who, once members of the privileged classes, are to-day men 'without occupation',[1] gaining a precarious livelihood from occasional work, only those coming from the lowest grade of the 'upper classes' have chosen the profession of labourers.

In the case of the peasants we can no longer speak of any inherent congruity between their work and the new temporary occupation. To them, especially to the peasants who do not practise a handicraft beside agriculture, paid labour in addition to farm-work, a form of labour, moreover, which keeps them for months from their homes, must appear as something quite new and unprecedented. If to-day paid labour is gradually attracting the peasant class as well, twenty or thirty years ago the (very prosperous) Nupe peasants had to be coaxed by all available means to undertake temporary paid labour, for example, in railway construction. The more 'sophisticated' Hausa and Yoruba were already then flocking in large numbers to work of this kind. Missionaries who knew Nupe country at that time told me that it was often impossible in the peasant districts to obtain even porters to carry loads; the promise of money did not attract them sufficiently to make them leave their homes even temporarily, to upset their whole routine of work or forgo their well-earned leisure. In certain backward and prosperous districts this

[1] An unofficial occupational census of Bida lists 1,130 men under the class 'no occupation'. They belong without exception to the titled leisured classes of the Emirate.

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511 556 characterize the standards of living of the lower social strata—with their meaning significantly altered. For 'maintenance of labour' read increase of capital and wealth; for 'demands of the community' dictates of status and prestige. The latter pervade the whole field of expenditure. Expenditure of wealth in any form, whatever its primary and avowed purpose, represents expenditure for the sake of status and prestige at the same time.

Investment of capital in human labour—slaves, pawns, or clients—also enhances the prestige of the man who can afford such investment and the life of leisure which it entails. The lavish scale of kinship feasts similarly reflects social status. Presents on a generous scale, to the king or influential noblemen, or liberal hospitality as befits the man of substance, are at the same time practical means of winning the favour of social superiors and securing a reliable political following. In the house of a Bida nobleman of moderately high standing, for example, six *bara* who lived with him, and five *bara* who lived outside, in their own houses, were daily guests at at least one meal—a hospitality which very nearly doubled household expenses.[1]

511 554 595 In a society in which marriage is by bride-price, and by high bride-price at that, the marriage arrangements must also become an index of wealth and status. Wealth and status are infallibly reflected in the number of wives a man possesses. We have seen that, while small peasants or small craftsmen and traders are content with one or two wives, no Bida man of standing would have less than four, and many even considerably more (whether legitimate wives or concubines). We will not exaggerate the share of prestige and status in this 'investment': the practice in the houses of the nobility to 'pension off' ageing wives and replace them by young attractive girls shows the contribution of more concrete motives also. On the other hand, wealthy Bida families will pride themselves in marrying off their sons at an early age, four to five years before they reach what is normally regarded as marriageable age. This is clearly done for the sake of prestige of the parents rather than for the benefit of the boy-husband, who, for example, may still be a pupil in the Government school (I have known of two such).

511 554 565 484 This twofold significance of economic incentives among the *élite* of Nupe society is no less clearly pronounced in expenditure of a more personal nature. 'Clothes make the man' in Nupe as elsewhere; in the possession of arms one sees not only fighting equipment, and in the possession of a horse not only a means of transport, but symbols of rank and status. I will conclude this list with the description of one cultural incentive which carries the concept of status and prestige into a rather remote domain of social life—travelling. Travelling forms indeed part of the life of the Nupe gentleman, and the young men of the higher nobility, especially the princes of the royal house, are sent, like their brothers in Victorian England, on a traditional Grand Tour. It takes them through the northern Emirates, to the cities and courts of famous

[1] The total consumption at the midday meal was approximately 5 lb. of porridge, made with fish and palm-oil sauce. The share of the family, including the family head, his wives, and his children, was 3 lb., that of the *bara* 2 lb.

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rulers, with whom they stay as honoured guests, and whom they will repay, one day, by similar hospitality extended to their young relations. (I have mentioned, in a different context, how I met two princes from Sokoto whose Grand Tour had taken them to the court of the *Etsu* Nupe in Bida.) The noble tourists enjoy their travels and enjoy—as they put it—'seeing the world'. But this incentive of travelling for travelling's sake with which their education and cultural background inculcate them also serves, indirectly, the political purpose of fostering personal contacts and ties of friendship between the ruling families of Nigeria and, more specially, the widespread Fulani empire.

We must now ask ourselves to what extent these wants and incentives apply to the society at large and determine (more or less) the economic decisions of the people. We must ask, more particularly, whether there do not exist 'upper limits' by which the economic ambitions of the various classes are bounded—whether by choice or of necessity. Such limits exist in the form of objects and values which have come to be regarded as fixed symbols of political status and which, like status itself, are excluded from free economic choice, being attainable only by the ladder of social promotion. As fixed symbols of status, much as a uniform or decoration in our society, the glazed turban of the nobility, or the right to carry a silver sword, cannot be coveted as such. This limitation has also been accepted with respect to the recent innovation, the clock in the glass case carried by the body-servant of a noble master: the people outside the ranks of the nobility have not attempted—as well they might—to possess themselves of this new emblem of rank.

But though promotion to political status and acquisition of its paraphernalia represent things that 'cannot be bought' (we shall discuss certain exceptions later), most of the features characteristic of the social life on these more exalted planes are, in theory, of the nature of universal economic wants. Beautiful clothes, costly turbans, and the possession of a horse are widely desired and can be acquired by anyone who can afford the expense. Even wants which are so far beyond the means or labour which commoners and peasants can muster that for this reason alone they seem unlikely to become concrete ambitions outside the *élite* of the country, represent yet common wants and ideals. Thus we find the ornate high-gabled square or round entrance hut which is typical of the large houses of the Bida nobility also in certain villages, put up by chiefs or prosperous family heads. Beautifully ornamented houses of a more modest type, moreover, are found everywhere, in every section or stratum of the population. Now, one of the most convincing proofs of the universality of these economic wants is the absence of all unfavourable comments, especially in the form of ridicule, with respect to individuals reaching out for goals not normally attained in their station of life. This is a significant illustration: in the small village of Doko I observed one house built in an unusually sumptuous style—with coloured earthenware plates inlaid in the walls of the *katamba*. It belonged to a musician, an ordinary 'commoner', who had been very successful in his profession. The people who told me about the house and its owner admitted that he was neither a titled elder nor in any way

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accepted code of society. Status in Nupe is determined by descent or formal promotion to rank and office. One of the accepted and most important means by which prestige can be gained is wealth. This raises the question of the closeness of the relation between status, and prestige gained through wealth. In other words, we must ask to what extent prestige gained through wealth tends to facilitate the attainment of status, and may even come to be regarded as its equivalent, or, conversely, to what extent high social status can be reached and maintained without adequate financial support.

Under traditional conditions social status and wealth could hardly become separated as political rank implied far-reaching economic privileges—the acquisition of fiefs and land, the chances of booty, profits from slave-trade, and so forth. Even assuming that considerable wealth could be accumulated also by groups outside the recognized social *élite*, such as traders and craftsmen, it is clear that their highest income could not rival the resources vested in a privileged political position. In present-day Nupe traditional political ranks and wealth are no longer inseparably linked. High social status does not invariably guarantee the demands of prestige also. The members of the *élite*, no longer in a position to combine the satisfaction of the more concrete wants with that of the demands of prestige, will have to choose between the different forms of expenditure. Yet here we find, rather surprisingly, that the expenses for the sake of prestige can be very considerably reduced without affecting the conception of status. The fixed symbols of status, the glazed turban and the silver sword, are either comparatively cheap or are heirlooms. The house, also inherited, may have to be left in disrepair; but its lay-out would still betray the status of its owner. Polygamy can be maintained to a certain extent thanks to the practice of marriage in the family, with low bride-price, which is customary among the *élite*. Horses, new dresses, ornaments, lavish hospitality—they all have to go. But travelling and leisure need not disappear. The former is satisfied by claiming hospitality from relatives or friends in distant parts, or even from social inferiors, who would not think of refusing such flattering requests. The latter manifests itself in the choice of profession of impecunious noblemen: very few have taken to farming or tried to learn a craft; theirs are mostly the unskilled 'free' professions of the leisured class. Thus even on the decline, the social *élite* secures the satisfaction of certain wants which to the lower orders of the society are permanently unattainable. Nupe society built up a strong defence of the prerogatives of status in the form of class-obligations and the utilization of inheritance. With its help the social *élite* of the country can hope to weather at least temporary difficulties and set-backs.

That this defence of class prerogatives has not yet lost its strength is evident in the hesitant attitude of the people towards accepting the new evaluation of wealth as independent of traditional status. The issue is by no means clear; it is confused by various concomitant factors, specially by the introduction of the new official ranks and positions under the N.A. some of which are vested in the old ruling class, while others have been bestowed on 'new men' from outside the traditional *élite*. But

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there is convincing evidence to show that high social status still attaches to traditional ranks, though they may no longer command their former financial reward, rather than to wealth alone. Evidently this is only a transitional solution. In a society in which high status is so closely identified with a definite standard of living the separation of the two cannot be maintained indefinitely, at least not without some radical change in the whole concept of the *élite*. Theoretically, had their ranks not been divided by the appointment of some of their members to modern official posts, the Nupe aristocracy could have chosen the diehard solution of reinterpreting the whole concept of status and making it independent of economic advantages. As it is, the old *élite* must either win back its economic supremacy (which is impossible, though the attempts have never been given up), or else admit the new nobility of wealth into its ranks. We can observe this new conception taking shape. The respect for the traditional values is only strong enough to maintain an external continuity—the continuity of the symbols of status. And the 'new men' are the first to submit to this rule which allows them to legitimatize their position: they buy the titles which are the only passports to acceptance among the social *élite*. Here then, we have a final, and most modern, use of capital investment, for the sake of social advancement in its purely abstract and symbolic form.

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CHAPTER XXI
ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

ECONOMIC MOBILITY

565 556 558 THE lack of tangible data makes it impossible to formulate any theory about the extent to which economic mobility, i.e. movement between the strata, was a reality in pre-European days. We can only make a few statements based on social and historical facts the economic significance of which we can, with some certainty, assess. Economic betterment in every society depends on the possibility of increasing one's hold over resources and means of production. The Fulani conquest, and the exploitation of land which followed it, restricted, for one part of Nupe at least, mobility with regard to the main resource, land. The restriction could, however, be circumvented by means of political allegiance, i.e. by becoming the client of an influential landowner. There is also evidence that certain peasants and craftsmen have owned slaves and taken pawns, thus acquiring interest-bearing capital, and so rising above the average level of a peasant's or artisan's livelihood. In the ruling classes and among their dependants careers involving increased economic opportunities were the normal thing, whether they were expressed in a share in booty and slave-trade or in rewards to warriors and political followers 'for services rendered'. The reverse process, loss of economic opportunities, and in the extreme case the loss of all possessions, was no less marked. In the life of the peasant, such changes occurred in the course of wars and raids involving the destruction of homesteads, farms, and stores. The peasants in Nupe kingdom proper, though safe from slave-raids, were still exposed to similar attacks: punitive expeditions which, directed against a rebellious feudal lord, were fought on their land, or the visitation of armies which marched through and foraged from their farms. In the ruling group economic downfall could mean only one thing: political disgrace, often accompanied by confiscation of their property.

565 To-day the risks of war and raids have disappeared, together with the exploitation and one-sided source of income which they represented. Thus the new rule has to some extent levelled down the old economic inequalities. Clearly this levelling-down cannot have been equally welcome to every section of the population. Let me quote here the very frank and, in fact, typical statement of one of my most honest informants, an influential village elder of Mokwa. He admitted the great benefits of the present rule, thanks to which the *tálaka*, the poor man, enjoys safety from wars, raids, and political abuses. But then he added (rather heatedly in fact): 'But you have turned us all into *tálaka*.' This view, coming as it does not from a member of the ruling class but from a typical Nupe peasant, makes it necessary to review more closely the economic effects of the new order.[1] All our data tend to show that, although trade

[1] It incidentally supplies further evidence of the fact that a rise to superior economic position also occurred in the peasant classes.

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and commerce have greatly benefited from the new development, the position of the peasants and craftsmen has not improved to the extent of enabling them to accumulate reserves and increase their resources to any considerable extent. The introduction of commercial crops, the cultivation of which is officially encouraged, represents a policy designed to open to the native cultivator the way to economic betterment. Yet the insecurity of these new resources may defeat their own ends. A more recent move to improve the economic position of the farmers was the launching of a policy to introduce mixed farming into Bida Emirate. Mixed farming, which had been adopted some years previously in certain northern Emirates, was started in Nupe towards the end of my second expedition. At that time only the demonstration farms of the N.A. and certain stretches of land belonging to the Emir, all worked by wage-labour, had been put under the new cultivation. While it is thus too early to describe actual results, it is possible to outline, from the study of the underlying principles, certain probable effects of this agricultural policy on the economic and social system of the country. They are sufficiently far-reaching to warrant here a more extensive examination.[1]

This policy envisages a gradual transformation of the whole of Northern Nigeria into arable country cultivated on Western lines, on the basis of individual landholdings. The working team should consist of one man and a boy. The 2 acres per head which have hitherto corresponded to an individual worker would be extended to 12, and eventually to 20 acres. The manure gained from the draught cattle would do away with the necessity of shifting cultivation and would allow practically unlimited cultivation of the same stretch of land. A four-field scheme of rotation is suggested, with one field manured, and the following crops grown on the different fields: sorghum and millet (on the manured field); cotton; ground-nuts; cassava and small crops. The most prosperous farmers in a district are to be persuaded to take up mixed farming first, thus giving an example which, it is hoped, many others will soon follow. The total cost of the draught cattle (two bullocks and one cow) and plough is £7 for an iron, and £5 for a wooden, plough. Farmers who are unable to buy the equipment outright will be given an advance on future profits of £1 to £1. 10s., or can pay an 'entrance fee' of approximately that amount, being expected to pay the rest, viz. repay the advance, in four yearly instalments which include a hiring charge of 5 per cent. The greatly increased yield should make these payments easy: it has been calculated that the farmer will be able to increase his production eightfold by the new method.

The scheme, admirable though its intentions are, may easily be wrecked if certain inherent dangers and difficulties are not carefully considered. Let us take the example of the most prosperous and progressive farmers of Lemu whose landholdings we have examined in an earlier chapter (see p. 212). We found that the total land under cultivation in the case of a working group of five and three men was 9½ and 6 acres,

[1] I am greatly indebted to the Superintendent of Agriculture in Bida for having allowed me access to the departmental files on mixed farming.

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their brains, and represent, in a society of peasants, craftsmen, and traders, the intelligentsia. This will become even clearer when we examine the motley rising generation of Mallams.

Koran teaching begins as a rule in early youth, when the child is 6 or even 5 years old. The teaching of the Koran itself is reckoned to take five to ten years. Some pupils learn quicker than others, and in one school I found a boy of 13 already studying 'knowledge', while one of 17 was still worrying his way through the Koran. But on the whole this elementary stage is considered mere routine work which most students can master in the given time. The teaching of 'knowledge', on the other hand, depends entirely on talent and individual inclination. Pupils may be eager enough to try, but will give up later when they discover that 'they have no head for it' (a literal translation of the Nupe phrase). Nor can the time taken by these higher studies be fixed precisely. Ten to fifteen years is an average estimate—at least, after fifteen years' study one is reckoned to have become 'fully a Mallam'. But only prospective teachers will take this advanced course systematically, and continue their study year after year. The *dilettanti* pursue their studies much more irregularly and leisurely, and students of 35 or more may often be seen in the schools of the teachers of 'knowledge'.

The Mallam schools receive pupils from every class and every walk of life. I have compiled some figures to illustrate the social origin of the pupils of Bida Koran schools:

Father's profession	*Mallams*	*Traders*	*Farmers*	*Guild-craftsmen*	*Individual craftsmen*	*Nobility*	*Clerks, messengers, &c.*	*Total*
Studying: Koran	40	16	30	6	20	22	8	151
'Knowledge'	28	4	2	..	20	8	10	72

That the sons of Mallams are in a majority is not surprising, nor that individual craftsmen and members of the nobility should come next in number. Of the twenty-eight sons of Mallams who were studying 'knowledge' six were going to adopt a different profession (of messengers, clerks, labourers, or servants to Europeans). Of the forty-four other students of 'knowledge' sixteen were going to become Koran teachers either in Bida or in the villages. These sixteen prospective Mallams included, incidentally, the two farmers' sons. None of the sons of guild-craftsmen took up teaching as a profession: a proof of the strong organization of these 'closed professions'. The large number of farmers who send their boys to Bida Koran schools may appear surprising; and even more so that a certain number of them should take up the study of the Koran professionally (for among the boys who are at present studying the Koran a few are likely to become Koran teachers). One example may serve: a boy of 13, the only son of a farmer, was studying to become a Mallam. He was well aware that at the death of his father the land would be lost to his family. Nevertheless he would not return to farm-work. His father had made him a Mallam, and that was all there was to it. Again and again, in similar cases, I was told: 'We are no longer strong enough to work on the land', or 'After all, is the profession of a Mallam

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not as good as that of a farmer?' There is no evidence, incidentally, that physical disability, an ailment which might impair their working capacity, is a reason for sending boys to Mallam schools. The choice of the Mallam profession is, in the full sense of the word, a free choice of profession.[1]

The Mallam schools both in Bida and in the peasant districts are steadily increasing. The Nigerian Census mentions over 1,000 Koran schools in Niger Province, most of which are found in Nupe Emirate. I have estimated that Bida town possesses over 100 Koran schools, with over 1,000 pupils (out of a population of 24,000, with 5,000 male children). Kacha has fifteen Koran schools, Kutigi, a much more primitive and semi-pagan village, six, of which two already give higher instruction. This spreading of Mohammedan education leaves no doubt that parents increasingly desire their children to receive the benefits of Mohammedan learning. We have to accept this as a general trend in modern Nupe society, not so much towards true education—which few of the boys will ever attain—as towards the higher social status—the status of a leisured-class intelligentsia—which the position of a Mallam, rightly or wrongly, suggests.

Earlier in this book I have referred to the profession of Mallams as one of the mechanisms of social mobility. I have also called Mohammedan education, by means of which the religion and, indirectly, the whole spiritual background of the ruling classes is diffused throughout the country, one of the 'binding forces' of the Nupe state. Here we have found concrete evidence to support these statements. Let me summarize the main conclusions which we can draw from the present discussion. First, the profession of Mallams comprises contrasts of wealth and rank, which occur nowhere else in the framework of a single profession. The only common feature is that of a life without manual work, and of a certain social status raised above that of the ordinary commoner. Secondly, the Mallam profession is the only profession which we discovered in Nupe which is not ruled by the motive of material gains. On the contrary, people will sacrifice even the security of work on the land for the meagre and insecure income that goes with the rise in status and the attainment of the life of the leisured class.

AGE-GRADE ASSOCIATIONS

The Nupe name for age-grade association is *ena gbarúfuži*, lit. 'society' or 'association of the young men'.[2] Although nearly every Nupe boy or

[1] I had wondered whether there was any relation between the professional choice and the size of the family, whether perhaps in large families a son would be more likely to study for Mallam than in small families, where every member would be needed for farm-work. Then again, I thought it possible that in these days of the breaking-up of the family-unit orphans would be placed more readily in Mallam schools. Neither correlation, however, is true—as is shown in these figures: of 32 students of farming stock 9 were only sons, 10 were one of two sons, 9 had brothers who also studied the Koran, and 4 were orphans.

[2] Informants who have picked up a few words of pidgin-English translated *ena* as 'company'.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND POLITICAL SYSTEM

LOCAL AND KINSHIP GROUPING

Descent and succession to offices and the inheritance of rights to land and other property are normally patrilineal among all Nupe. At the same time kin ties traced through the mother may afford opportunities for advancement and, especially in Bida the capital, maternal connections with persons of rank may be used to advantage in the political sphere. The Nupe term *dengi* connotes kinship in the widest sense to include all recognized cognates, but the effective *dengi* of an individual consists mainly of his agnates or patrilineal relatives descended from a common ancestor several generations back. Maternal kin ties, on the other hand, are rarely traced or effective beyond one or two generations. Groups of male patrikin are significant both as the nuclei of residential groups in extended families and in the status system of the chiefdom.

The domestic unit is usually an elementary or polygynous family, i.e., a man, his wife or wives, and unmarried children.[1] This, or a larger group consisting of a man, his wives, married sons, their wives and children, or of a set of brothers, their wives, children, and grandchildren, the nucleus of which is thus a patrilineage of small span, inhabits a division of the compound, keeps house and eats in common, and forms a single productive or labour unit. No special name exists for this group apart from that referring to its organization as a labour unit or *efakó*. The larger unit was formerly general, but under modern conditions the family has tended to divide when sons become adult. The domestic family normally forms part of a larger social unit, the "house" (*emi*), which is both a kinship and a territorial group and may also be referred to as a *katamba*, a term for the common gateway or entrance to an enclosed compound. An *emi* may be localized in one compound or may be distributed over a number of adjacent compounds, occupying either the whole or part of a ward (*efu*). In Bida the *emi* tends to be more widely scattered. The nucleus of an *emi* again consists of a body of patrikin to which wives and others are attached. Its head is known as the *emitsó* ("owner of the house"), a position which falls to the senior male member of the group, who is succeeded by the next in seniority of the same generation, and so on. When a section of an *emi* separates physically it continues to recognize its former head while he lives, but on his death it often attains an independent position with its own head. The size of the *emi* varies considerably. In Bida, those of commoners are often small and may contain no more than six or eight individuals; in the smaller settlements and among the nobility they may include as many as 60 persons.

Beyond these groups the Nupe also often recognize kinship over a still wider field. Thus a whole village may be regarded as descended from one ancestor, but such essentially mythical kinship links do not involve any specific kinship claims and obligations.

The three royal houses of Nupe may be regarded as large lineages or "clans," for they claim to observe rigid patrilineal descent believed to have proceeded from sanctified "first ancestors."

FORMS OF SETTLEMENT: HOUSE TYPES[2]

Nupe live in compact villages or towns (*ezi* is the term for both) which vary considerably in size; in Bida Emirate, besides the capital, there are three considerable settlements: Doko (800), Mokwa (2,000), Kutigi (3,000). Some, on the other

[1] Nadel, 1942, pp. 25–33.
[2] Nadel, 1942, pp. 24, 27–32, 34, 36– , 226–7; 1938; Temple, 1919, p. 324; Malam Aliyu Bida, notes, ed. Harris.

643 The ndaKó gboyá cult for
[754] the detection and killing of witches might not be performed in or near the town in which the *Etsu* was living, nor might anyone be put to death there. All these features, together with the ancient rule of inheritance whereby the first son born during his father's reign as *Etsu* became the heir, have disappeared, while a new background of respect for the memory of Mallam Dendo,[6] the first of the Fulani rulers of Nupe, has been created. What was once probably a divine kingship has been replaced by a system of rule by the militarily strong and the king has become *primus inter pares* among the hierarchy of rank holders.

643 . The three dynasties stemming from Mallam Dendo to-day succeed to the throne
633 in strict rotation. The *Etsu* is the head of the reigning house, the *Shaba*[8] (" heir-presumptive ") the head of the dynasty next in succession, and the *Kpotuŋ* the head of the third house. Bida town is divided into three sections (*eka*) each bearing the name of one of the royal dynasties and each having its own royal palace. The country around is similarly divided into three parts.

643 Every *Etsu* Nupe has sought during his reign to increase the power and wealth of his house. Former sources of income were the royal monopoly of the kola-nut trade,[9] the control of the *ndakó gboyá* anti-witchcraft society, and profits from the royal estates and from the slave trade. To-day, apart from his salary, the *Etsu* receives only profits from the royal estates and from occasional trading.

Status and Titles[1]

565 There are marked status differences in Nupe society and many symbols of social
554 distinction, such as the wearing of an indigo-blue glazed turban by the nobility, ways of greeting equals and superiors, the giving of kola-nuts (the number and quality reflecting precisely the social status of the donor and recipient), and the right to go about on horseback. Families and lineages appear to fall into class divisions according to the status in the system of ranked titles ascribed to or achieved by some of their members. While each class is, in the main, a closed group, there are opportunities for promotion within the higher classes and also some inter-class nobility, whereby entry into the higher orders may be obtained through wealth, war service, marriage, or " clientship."[9] Social ascent is controlled and marked by the hierarchy of titles. Within a grade of titles promotion to a higher title entails a reshuffle among the holders of the lower titles.

565 Of the three classes, the first, *waci* or *gitsúži* (the royal nobility) consists of the descendants of Mallam Dendo in three royal houses, Usman Zaki, Masaba, and Umaru, under their heads, *Etsu*, *Shaba*, and *Kpotuŋ*. This class is detached in origin and status from the rest of the community on account of the part it played in the wars and its position as royal fief-holders (*egba*)[10] in charge of large districts of the kingdom. The new king is elected from the *gitsúži*, every title-holder in which has in principle a chance of becoming king, though the royal prince who succeeds to the throne will generally have attained the rank of *Shaba*.[11] As well as the reshuffle of personnel holding the various titles which takes place on the death of a high title-holder and the subsequent appointment of his successor, there is a large-scale exchange of residences, younger brothers or sons moving into houses vacated by the death or promotion of their older brothers or fathers, for the residences of

[6] See above, p. 22.
[8] This office has been allowed to lapse since 1935 and the main functions have devolved upon the next in rank.
[9] i.e., the best kola-nuts grown at Laboshi.
[1] Nadel, 1942, pp. 93–103.
[9] See below, p. 35.
[10] See below, p. 36.
[11] Nadel states that only twice was a man who had not acquired the title of *Shaba* (or *Kpotuŋ* if the *Shaba* had died) made *Etsu*. Of the 41 royal titles held in 1936, 10 were held by Usman Zaki, 17 by Masaba, and 14 by Umaru, the ruling house at that time. See Nadel, 1942, pp. 95–7, for a detailed list of titles held by the various houses in 1936. Apparently new titles are often introduced.

3: Forde E-4 (no date) 1955 FF52 Nupe FF52

the highest *gitsú* ranks go with the title. First appointment to a title and promotion to a higher one are granted by the king in council with the royal princes and other officers of state. Any able-bodied man of senior age, proved loyalty, and ability, and good health, of the Fulani families, is eligible for admission to a *gitsúži* title, but favouritism, intrigue, and bribery also play a part, and the titles which a family has been able to accumulate are an indication of its influence at court and its favour with the ruling king. When a title-holder becomes incapable, through age or illness, of fulfilling his duties, a younger man is appointed, the former holder being styled "old *Kpotuŋ*" or whatever the title may be. Nobody with any kind of deformity can hold a title, since the system was originally based on service in war and offices vital to the safety of the state. Investiture takes place in the *Etsu*'s house, in the presence of the *Alkali* or *Liman*, a propitious day having first been selected by mallams or diviners. The candidate is addressed by the *Etsu*, then clothed in a cloak and embroidered gown by the *Alkali* who also places a turban on his head. After prayers in which all join, the new holder rides through the town accompanied by other title-holders, and dismounts to greet princes or heads of houses at their residences.

The second class is that to which the *ticiži* or *rowni* (office-holding nobility) belong. The name *rowni* means "turbans" and refers to the fact that the bestowal of such a title is symbolized by the gift of a turban from the king. There are three groups of *ticiži*, each of which is regarded as a sharply defined social order: the *sarakiži*, the *ena manži*, and the *ena wuži*. The *sarakiži* is a group of civil and military nobility consisting of town elders (*ena ndeji*) and war leaders (*ena 'kuŋ*). The second order, *ena manži*, comprises the mallams, the religious and judicial officials, such as the *Alkali* (judge), and the *Liman* (religious head), with their assistants and scribes. The third order, *ena wuži*, which is the lowest in rank but still possesses great influence, consists of the court slaves.

Many of the *saraki* titles are identical in name with those bestowed on the village elders, but the symbols of status, even when similar, refer to very different social contexts. *Saraki* titles are, like *gitsú* titles, generally granted by the *Etsu* in council with princes and other officers of state. Theoretically, at least, outsiders, even commoners, who have won his favour may be admitted to the ranks. Only a few of the higher titles, which have become the prerogatives of certain families, are hereditary. Several titles cannot be accumulated in a single family. They are bestowed exclusively on one member of the family group; no other close relative can then claim a title or office in addition to the one already bestowed on his "house." To-day wealth and financial influence are important factors in gaining titles and the *saraki* group includes rich traders, as well as descendants of the old official nobility of pre-Fulani Nupe, and Nupe families who became partisans of the Fulani conquerors. These *sarakiži* received no salary, but were formerly granted land and slaves.

The *Ndeji* ("father of the town"), the head of the *ena ndeji*, is in charge of the affairs of Bida and the most powerful of the officers of state because he is closest to the king. At the head of the other civil title-holders he holds the daily council (*nkó*) with the king himself. The military titles (*ena 'kuŋ*) were formerly those of war leaders, the different titles being associated with special responsibilities.

The *ena manži*, the order of mallams, is "a class between classes, a mobile privileged intelligentsia." It includes the *Alkali*, the *Liman*, and their assistants. The detailed knowledge of Moslem law and literature and the specialized training required limits the number of candidates. But the offices of *Liman* and *Alkali* are sometimes hereditary, reflecting a tradition of learning in certain families, and political influence, for many eminent mallams are of Fulani stock. Mallams are highly esteemed by everyone and are placed about commoners even when they are without rank or title and have only little learning. They are allowed to marry daughters and sisters of higher born families.

565 Below the *sarakiši* comes a group of minor office-holders, heads of the Bida craft guilds, who receive their titles and the customary gift of a turban from the *Etsu*. The head of the Bida brokers, who acts as an agent for the king in trade and commercial matters in the capital, holds a similar position.

565 The lowest titled class in the Nupe social order is that of the *ena wuši*, whose
567 members bear the titles of the former court slaves.[13] Formerly these titles were held by men of high birth captured in war and given titles in return for loyal service; they could rise in the service of the king as bodyguards, police, messengers, tax collectors, etc. A new king usually took over the officials of his predecessor.

565 Below the orders of title-holders come the commoners (*talakiši*), who constitute the great majority of the population.

Patronage[13]

566 A system of patronage or clientship is an important feature of Nupe society.
675 The client (*bara*) attaches himself to the household of his patron as a servant or in some other capacity from which he may rise to the position of a trusted friend and may even marry into the patron's family. Clients may be divided into three categories: those who seek political protection without surrendering their independence, who do not work for their patron but are regarded rather as "adopted children"; those who are poor and anxious to avoid hard work on the land; and those who hope to achieve some eminence by attaching themselves to a man of position and influence. The clients of the royal princes may rise to high positions and eventually become the *bara* of a ruling king, their rank then being almost equal to that of the official nobility. Indeed, rich and ambitious men may even buy themselves a clientship in the house of a royal prince or of the king.

The system is beneficial to both parties, the client receiving material benefit and protection and possibly a title, and the patron acquiring servants, soldiers for the contingent he must provide for the king's army, and followers to add to his prestige.

Age-sets[14]

561 Boys and young men in a village or town are grouped in three graded associations: *ena wáwágiši*, for boys between the ages of about 10 and 15; *ena dzákangiši*, of ages *c.* 15 to 20, and *ena gbarúfuši*, of ages *c* 20 to 30. Every age-set (*ena*) passes successively through these grades. Except in the capital, there is only one set or association in each grade within the local community at any one time. Each is led by an older man or by a boy from the highest rank of the next grade. The head of the highest, known as *ndákotsú*, is chosen from among adults and has considerable influence. The main emphasis within the age-sets is on seniority. Titles, often copying those for adults in the wider society, are distributed by the leader on the basis of reputation, ability, and merit, sometimes anticipating the future rank of the holder. Those acquired in the highest grade may be retained by the young man for life. The chief public functions of the sets lie in the execution of co-operative tasks, but they also have a recreational side.

For girls, an association (*ena*) exists only for the lowest age-set.

Government[15]

631 Prior to the more recent developments of local government, the Nupe kingdom was divided into four zones for the purposes of political, judicial, and tax administration. The first was the territory of the conquered and tributary "outside" peoples; the second, within the boundaries of the kingdom proper, included the

[12] For a description of slavery proper, see below, p. 41.
[13] Nadel, 1942, pp. 122–7.
[14] Nadel, op. cit., pp. 383–401; 1935a, pp. 209–71, 292.
[15] Nadel, 1942, pp. 115–16

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SLAVERY

567 Slaves attached to the royal house and the nobility could rise to positions of wealth and influence, and some of the former titled court slaves have in recent times become Native Authority officials. Slaves had a certain measure of social and economic independence; though female slaves had no income and their earnings belonged to their master, they might become the concubines of a free man and be given their freedom. Any children born would in any case be free. Male slaves could seek to purchase their independence.

Slaves were obtained both by capture in war and by purchase in the Bida market. Owners had the power of life and death over slaves, though in practice they rarely maltreated them. Indeed, when slavery was abolished, many former slaves elected to remain as unpaid servants with their former masters. Children born to a man's slaves were called *mangi* (" children of the house ") and could not be sold, maltreated, or killed. They were brought up as members of the household but were not entitled to a share in the master's inheritance. A master would, however, provide the marriage payment for a marriage arranged by him for one of his slaves with another slave.[33]

PAWNING

426 The practice of pawning human pledges grew to enormous proportions before 558 its final suppression in 1933–34. Under the pressure of unexpected or imperative demands, one person in a family, preferably a male, would be pawned for 5–10 years. Pawning was regarded as a disgrace and the pawns were looked down on by their masters and even by the household slaves.[34]

POSITION OF WOMEN

562 Women's activities, other than household tasks, include spinning, weaving, cooking cakes for sale in the market, and hairdressing (a lucrative profession). Women are also doctors and traders, though those whose professional duties keep them away from home for long periods are commonly regarded as " loose " women. They collect the produce of all trees except palm-oil and kola; they cultivate and sell groundnuts and root crops and help to trade some of the men's crops.

A woman's earnings as a trader cannot be touched by her husband, but remain her property until her death, when he inherits them. Among commoners a woman is often better-off than her husband and may lend him money for taxes and the purchase of tools, and even provide for marriages and funerals. The inter-sex hostility, which has been accentuated by the economic independence and consequent sexual freedom of women, also shows itself in the Nupe conception of witchcraft, where a witch is thought to do mystically what a woman actually does in everyday life.[35]

562 The most important women's titles are those of *nimuɔye*, of the royal house of 565 Masaba, and *sagi*, of the royal houses of Umaru and Usman Zaki alternatively. Quarrels between women are brought before women holding these titles and the women of Bida town and the villages bring them gifts. *Sagi* is also the title of the " head of the women " in every Nupe village. The chief woman commoner in Bida has the title of *sonya;* she organizes all large-scale women's work and is entrusted with the supervision of the market. She is now an official of the Native Administration, receiving a small salary. The status of a woman by descent is not 554 reduced on marriage, since Nupe class sentiments cannot admit a lowering of the status of anyone high-born.[36]

[33] Nadel, 1942, pp. 103–8, 157.
[34] Ibid., pp. 311–13.
[35] Nadel, 1954a, pp. 172–81.
[36] Nadel, 1942, pp. 331–4, 147–56; Temple, 1919, p. 326.

CULTURAL FEATURES AND THE LIFE CYCLE

Physical Characteristics: Tribal Marks: Dress

142 While the aboriginal Nupe sub-tribes (Ebe, Beni, Ebagi, and Bataci) are negro in appearance, there are indications of considerable non-negro elements in their ancestry. A striking type with oval face, high cheekbones, and slightly mongoloid eyes is often found among those of mixed Fulani descent.

181 The Nupe are known all over Nigeria as an industrious and formerly warlike people. They are progressive and anxious to try new methods, e.g., in agriculture. The women are keen and successful traders.

634 There are no facial marks common to the Nupe people as a whole, but sub-
304 tribes are distinguished to some extent. Many sub-tribes have to-day adopted "Bida" marks in addition to their own.

291 Commoners wear a loincloth, with a blue cloth thrown over the shoulder and
565 the blue phrygian cap, said to be the traditional headgear of the Nupe. Nobles and other well-to-do men wear trousers and a flowing white robe and turban.[1]

Birth

843 The rituals surrounding childbirth begin at the time of conception and culminate in the naming ceremony. As soon as the pregnancy becomes noticeable (generally in the third to the fifth month) the parents must discontinue sexual relations and the mother must avoid places inhabited by spirits and abstain from eating certain foods which are thought to have a harmful effect on the unborn child. Special rules or avoidances may be prescribed by the diviner whom the father will consult immedi-
844 ately, and again at the beginning of the confinement and before the naming ceremony. The father keeps away during the actual birth, his elder sister, mother, or other kinswoman assisting the mother, and his father or father's brother cutting the
851 umbilical cord and disposing of the afterbirth, which is buried outside the hut. Thereafter the child's paternal grandfather plays a more important part than the father, announcing the birth of his grandchild and receiving congratulations.

553 The naming ceremony (*suna*) usually takes place eight days after the birth.
852 It is traditionally preceded, on the seventh day, by a libation of beer to the ancestor thought to be reborn in the child. The name used always to be announced by the child's grandfather before a group of relatives, without any particular ceremonial. To-day, however, with the spread of Islam, the announcement is usually made by a mallam. It is at this time also that the child's hair is cut and the tribal marks scratched on the cheeks and forehead.[2]

845 Twins are generally welcomed, but infants born with teeth are regarded as a bad omen.[3]

Circumcision

304 Circumcision (*zuŋ'ba*) is universal, but it does not appear to be regarded as one of the more important rituals. It is performed on boys individually between the ages of 8 and 11, whenever the father thinks fit, by a barber, who is usually paid sixpence or a shilling. Women must be away from the house when it is done, otherwise there is no ceremonial.[4]

No corresponding ceremony is reported for girls.

[1] Nadel, op cit., pp. 25, 237, 362, 405–6 (sketches of tribal marks); Meek, I, 1925, pp. 28–9; Line, 1947.
[2] Nadel, 1954a, pp. 115–16.
[3] Nadel, personal communication: Malam Aliyu Bida, Ms. Notes.
[4] Nadel, op cit., p. 116.

MARRIAGE

582 Marriage among the aristocracy is largely endogamous, i.e., within the ruling
565 class, this "family marriage" as the Nupe call it being characterized by a much lower marriage payment than exogamous marriage. Parallel and cross-cousin marriages are encouraged by Moslem custom, though the former is contrary to the traditional marriage rules, so that the scope of "family marriage" is considerably widened. The practice of polygyny, and the fact that the number of wives indicates wealth and status, leads men of wealth and position to marry outside their social group. In order to keep within the Moslem law of four wives only, further wives are relegated to the position of concubines. Ageing wives of the nobility are divorced and replaced by younger girls.[5]

584 According to Temple,[6] betrothal may be as early as 5–7 years for a girl and 10–12 for a boy, but this is not usual. The marriageable age for girls is usually 16–17, but may be as late as 20. Some of the wealthy Bida families marry off their sons very young to enhance their own prestige.[7]

583 Provision of the marriage payment (*ewó yawó*, "money of marriage") devolves on the head of the family section which is united in the labour unit (*efakó*).[8] It is made up of a series of payments of varying amounts, each of which has a special name. These are: "greeting," "small thanks," "great thanks," "money for henna," and "money for pots," as well as gifts to the bridesmaids and small annual presents of food to the girl's parents. The payments are usually spread over a period of three to five years. They are now valued as a total sum in money which has fluctuated considerably. In pre-British times it was about £3, but later rose to as high as £20, until, in 1934, the Administration intervened and fixed the upper limit at £7. It is becoming customary for the family head to provide the marriage payment only for the eldest son, younger sons having to contribute part of their own, or even bear the whole cost. It is usual for the bride's father to provide her with a dowry, generally consisting of gifts in kind.[9]

[184] Among the Dibo sub-tribe, according to Temple,[10] girls may be betrothed before birth. The marriage payment is high, but may be paid in farm work. The suitor may, however, be outbid by another and his presents returned before the consummation of the marriage.

588 A form of "woman marriage," similar to that practised by the Yoruba of Kabba Province, is recorded by Temple for the Nupe of Gurara District (Lapai Emirate). Here a rich woman goes through a form of marriage with a girl and allows men to have access to her. Any children born belong to the female "husband."[11]

585 The wedding ceremonial occupies a period of 12 days, divided into three phases of four days each. It begins when the bride, assisted by her young female companions, puts on her dress and veil and receives visitors in her house, the climax being reached on the fourth day when professional musicians and drummers are hired and the bride's father offers food and drink to the guests. Among these will be two envoys of the bridegroom, who will be present at a sacrifice offered by the bride's father to ensure a prosperous marriage blessed with children. Among Moslems a mallam makes a public announcement of the marriage at this stage, which legally establishes the bond. In pagan families, however, the bride is taken to her new home by the bridegroom's envoys, where she is received by her parents-in-law and taken to her newly painted sleeping-hut. The next morning the bridegroom's father performs a sacrifice at which the bride's mother's brother is present,

[5] Nadel, 1942, p. 150.
[6] Temple, 1919, p. 322.
[7] Nadel knew of two such cases where the husbands were still pupils at the Government school.
[8] See above, p. 26.
[9] Nadel, 1942, p. 51.
[10] Temple, 1919, p. 114.
[11] Ibid., p. 324.

5: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1947
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by the political changes as to account for the decline of chiefly authority. What has changed is rather the spiritual background, the conception, of Kede autonomous chieftainship. It has lost its place in the scheme of Kede political life, which is still growth and expansion. It has been shorn of the qualities of self-responsible and exclusive leadership, which, in this dynamic society, constituted the *raison d'être* of its once absolute power. What remains of the leadership vested in the Kede chief is a leadership moving in the narrow circle of modern administrative boundaries and under the patronage of another, higher, authority. It had to surrender its prerogative of guiding and protecting the movements of the group as they followed, farther and farther afield, the lead of the general economic and cultural development of the country.

This change in the whole political existence of the Kede is most conspicuous in the Kede groups which now lie outside Bida Emirate and the area ruled over by the *Kuta*. Here the liquidation of Kede autonomy could not have been effected without disturbing consequences had Kede chieftainship still held its old meaning. Sentimental bonds between the split-off groups and the mother-country are still conspicuous; but on the whole I have gained the impression that these groups do not (or no longer) seriously miss or resent the separation, or contemplate the possibility of some future reunion. The weakened appeal of political autonomy reflects the general development, political and cultural, that has overtaken the country and separated autonomy from its vital counterparts in social life: economic and cultural unity, and the solidarity of community life. To put it differently: cultural self-realization has become possible outside the narrow political boundaries. I shall have to return to this point; but let me mention here a certain proof of the statement just made—namely, the continued, and even increasing, emigration to those distant Kede settlements which could under no circumstances be anything else but 'minorities' under alien rule.

VII. Social Stratification

The division of political rights and duties in Kede country and, implied in it, the unequal economic advantage enjoyed by the different sections of the population constitute the basis of a rigid social stratification. Ethnic and cultural differences add their

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weight to it in that they coincide with, and are interpreted in the sense of, distinctions implying social gradation.

On the top of the social structure, we have the hereditary ruling class formed by the chief's family group, and below it the second stratum, which comprises the Kede of common status. Though the latter exercise no direct influence upon the policy of the State, they can yet in certain respects range themselves beside the ruling class: if the members of the ruling class decide the fate of the country and derive the main benefits from all political exploits, war or peaceful acquisition of territory—the Kede commoners take an active part in all activities on a tribal scale, even bearing the brunt in the most significant activity, colonization, and benefit to a considerable extent from the political successes of their rulers. Indirectly, by attaching themselves in subservient position to the households and factions of the ruling class, they attain a larger measure of political influence and certain economic advantages not warranted by their hereditary status. Moreover, their racial and cultural affinity with the class above, and the proportionate remoteness from the lowest class beneath, place the Kede commoners on one plane with the ruling group of the country. The lowest stratum comprises the 'original inhabitants', whom tradition paints as having been the subjects of the Kede from mythical times and having had no culture worth mentioning before the advent of the Kede. In fact, they are still, seen with Kede eyes, a 'primitive' and slightly contemptible group; they fail by the cultural standards which the Kede recognize, being pagans, inferior canoemen, and relatively poor. They were excluded from the tribal activities of the Kede and all benefits accruing from them; yet they suffered more than the other groups from the failures of their rulers' policy, unsuccessful wars or revolts, for their country might become the battle-field and their farms and villages be destroyed, while, unlike the ruling classes, they had no reward to expect in the event of success.

The question arises by what machinery the Kede maintained this rigid division into hereditary classes, kept intact the solidarity of their small minority, yet were able at the same time to integrate and bind to loyalty the heterogeneous sections of their State.[1] Our

[1] The strong bond of loyalty that existed between the Kede and their subject groups is illustrated in the historical fact that in the Katcha War certain *kintsoji* groups fought on the side of the Kede against the Emir of Bida.

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examination of the political organization has revealed one such machinery: the machinery of coercion. We must ask now how far other, non-political, forms of integration lend their support, or possibly are made to lend it, to political unification. We can distinguish three types of such supporting integrative agencies: (1) integration through actual co-operation between the sections of the population; (2) integration in the spiritual sphere—in other words, through ideologies teaching or preaching unity; (3) integration based on both. Instances of the first type are economic co-operation and community life, of the second, tradition and mythology, and of the third, religious practice.

VIII. Integrative Mechanisms

Economic Co-operation and Community Life. The propinquity of the Kede and *kintsoʒi* settlements, combined with the difference in their productive system, invites a certain measure of co-operation in the economic field. The Kede buy farm-produce from their peasant neighbours, who, in turn, use to some extent Kede transport to dispose of their surplus on the large river markets. This co-operation is by no means exclusive and does not lead to complete dependence upon each other. The peasants also sell some of their farm-produce inland or take their fish directly, on their own canoes, to riverside markets; similarly the Kede buy a certain amount of their food on the various outside markets which they visit on their river voyages.

In their community life, the two groups hardly achieve a more intensive, or less casual, co-operation. The difference in occupation and in the main interests of their lives is not balanced by any other strong ties. The young folk of the Kede and *kintsoʒi* frequently join in each other's dances; here and there friendships are struck between individuals from the two groups. But apart from these contacts the two sections keep to themselves. The age-grade associations do not stretch across the tribal boundary and, above all, there is almost no inter-marriage: the *kintsoʒi* arrange their marriages with their tribal relations inland, and the Kede marry among themselves.[1] In these marriages between Kede villages distance plays no part, which is rather significant, for the (inland) Nupe generally dislike marriages between distant places.

[1] This is true of all the older Kede settlements; in the more recent settlements (e.g. Katcha) I found a few cases of inter-marriage with the *kintsoʒi*.